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THE BEGINNINGS OF THE INFLUENCE OF DANTE IN CASTILIAN AND CATALAN LITERATURE¹

I

The word *influence* that I have used in the title of this paper is nowadays faded into the obscurity of a much abused bit of literary cant. Homer influenced Virgil, Dante influenced Fazio degli Uberti, Michael Angelo influenced Tintoretto, — and we let it go at that. The mere fact of influence, however, is not hard to discover, nor, when discovered, does it add much to the scientific knowledge of literature and art or to the general good of mankind. Any man endowed with the minimum requirement of intelligence, even if he has read his texts with the sole aim of pleasure, should recognize the existence of a relation between Homer and Virgil or Dante and Fazio degli Uberti. The first man that, as he looked at Tintoretto's "Moses on the Mount" or the "Paradise," discerned an imitation of the great Florentine's traits contributed little to the sum of human knowledge, even if he divulged his discovery to

¹ This paper is only in the nature of a preliminary study. It was hastily put together two years ago, but the various articles bearing upon the subject that have appeared since, such as Farinelli's admirable series upon Boccaccio in Spain in the *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen* and Hutton's insignificant résumé in the *Modern Language Review*, January, 1908, of what has already been written upon Dante in Spain, have not altered but rather ratified my conclusions. It seems advisable to me to determine the exact character and extent of what, beginning with the *Proemio* of Santillana, has been known as the first outburst of Dantesque influence in Spain, before examining or passing judgment upon its real position and importance in the evolution of Spanish literature, whether of Castile or Catalonia, and before approaching later allegory, which is thought to have sprung up, partly under its influence, partly under the impetus thus given to the appropriation of Dantesque elements. Emanating from *Amador de los Ríos*, such exaggerated and mutually contradictory statements have been vouchsafed by the several scholars who have discussed this subject that it is necessary, so to speak, to clear the ground in order to make possible a sane and unprejudiced search for the sources of the allegorical stream of the fifteenth century. Of these sources and their significance I am now preparing an extended study.

the whole world ; and an advance is achieved only when such men as Ruskin probe the nature and the results of the imitation.¹ The difference in influence is not only of degree ; Fazio's use of Dante is of a different nature from Virgil's or Homer's. It is absolutely necessary to distinguish these degrees and qualities of influence if any practical benefit is to be extracted from the study of literature. The mere presence of a relation between Dante and Imperial, who is the first in Castile to exhibit his influence, is evident to the most casual reader ; but there are literary and even moral precepts to be discerned from an analysis of the circumstances, nature, and effect of this influence.

Literary influence, then, may be broadly divided into two classes : spiritual influence, the simple impetus in a certain direction given to one literary personality by another ; and concrete influence, the actual written imitation of literary elements. Concrete influence may again be subdivided under three headings. To the first type belong imitations, which, rejecting the form of the original, employ the substance in a new framework. Examples readily suggest themselves : the chivalrous romances, which degenerated from the more elevated verse forms into the unadorned compass of prose tales ; the *De Theologica Platonica* of Marsilio Ficino, appearing in the verse of Benivieni ; or Italian novelle manipulated by Chaucer or the Elizabethan dramatists.

To the second type belong the imitations of form, which cannot be so sharply distinguished, since it is almost inevitable that the transfer of the form will carry with it some part of the substance. Because the form of the *Divine Comedy* was so definite and was itself not the invention of the poet but the apotheosis of elements that were familiar to the whole mediæval world, the work of Dante was subject rather to this sort of imitation. Perceiving the success of Dantesque methods, men of letters thought that the secret lay in the machinery that they could so clearly discern and so easily imitate ; but the substance and the spirit often escaped them altogether. The most conspicuous example is Fazio degli Uberti's *Dittamondo*.² Here upon the framework of the *Divine Comedy* and in *terza rima* he constructs an edifice of geographical and historical

¹ For example, in the essay on "Michael Angelo and Tintoretto." Ruskin is a man at present much misunderstood and maligned because we value simply facts, utterly neglecting their moral significance.

² For an analysis of this poem see Gaspary, *Gesch. der ital. Lit.*, vol. i, pp. 345 ff.

material. The author, whose Virgil is Solino, the great geographer, journeys tediously through three different continents, joined in his own land by the allegorical figure of Roma, who, like a spirit from Dante's cosmogony, relates the history of Italy. Again, Federico Frezzi of Foligno seeks his own end, but with Dantesque methods, and also in *terza rima*, in the *Quadriregio*.¹ The allegorical figures, though approximating rather the *Roman de la Rose*, are seen in a journey through the four realms of Love, Satan, the Vices, and the Virtues. In France, naturally, we should expect to encounter this kind of imitation, the personification of abstract qualities, whose vogue was confirmed by their masterful treatment at the hands of Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, arranged in the series of a Dantesque journey; and Christine de Pisan,² in the *Chemin de longue étude*, unites this method to material not unlike that of the *Dittamondo*, for she too, under the guidance of the Cumæan Sibyl, is led to the Font of Wisdom beneath Parnassus, where dwell the Muses, thence to the circuit of the world, to Constantinople, the Holy Land and Arabia, to the Pillars of Hercules, and beyond to the Earthly Paradise; and finally subjecting herself to French tradition, she transforms Dante's revolving spheres into a series of five heavens, from the fourth of which a ladder leads to the fifth, where sits Raison enthroned, listening to the respective pleas of Richesse and Sagesse, and in the end referring the debate to the good judgment of Charles V of France. Thus does Christine form within the Italian mold her own substance, to her own end, the glorification of Raison and her patron.

The third type is characterized by an imitation of both form and substance. Here should be classified the example of Homer and Virgil. The peculiarities of the epic form are maintained, and for substance the very actions of Æneas and the details of the wars are modeled closely upon the material of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The Sophonisba incident of Petrarch's *Africa* is a conscious imitation in form and substance of the Circe and Dido episodes of his predecessors; later Ronsard in the *Franciade* follows the precedent of Petrarch, and in the preface seeks to justify his procedure, giving elaborate advice for the

¹ For an analysis of this poem see Gaspary, *Gesch. der ital. Lit.*, vol. ii, pp. 90 ff.

² Cf. A. Farinelli, "Dante nell'opere di Christine de Pisan," *Aus rom. Sprachen und Lit.*, 1905, pp. 117-152.

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handling of ancient form and material, such as for the appearance of a goddess or the introduction of a storm and the constituents of its description. In the epic, indeed, the very material has become a question of conventional form. Of this slavish imitation, for Dante, there are no examples, to my knowledge, in France or Italy. Whether they occur in Spain is the point at issue; but upon an *a priori* basis we should require much more than the mere statement in order to yield our credence.

We have yet to consider the first of the two main headings, "spiritual influence," or the impulse imparted by the master to the disciple through example or through force of personality. If this impulse drives the recipient into channels similar to those in which the originator acts, it is difficult to distinguish the spiritual ascendancy exerted by one over the other from actual concrete influence as manifested in written productions. It is, perhaps, not impossible to discern spiritual influence in the impetus given by such humanists as Niccolò Niccoli or Dorat to their pupils, though even here there is no certainty that the works of the pupil do not embody the material of the unpublished lectures of the teacher. Niccoli, who wrote only a book on spelling and did some textual criticism, gave the impetus and means to Poggio to search for manuscripts in foreign libraries, and advanced the cause of humanism by opening the library of Boccaccio at Santo Spirito and leaving his own library to the same monastery; the efforts of Dorat are doubtless brought to light not only in the concrete expression of Ronsard, du Bellay, and Jean Antoine de Baïf, but in the more intangible and probably more important enthusiasm with which they devoted themselves to humanistic and literary pursuits. Again, the mere fact that Jean de Meun or Dante wrote in allegorical form may have influenced crowds of mediæval poets to follow their example, though the resulting allegory might be of a wholly different nature; and even when there is no trace of imitation in the later author, a spiritual influence may still be asserted. To become more general, the very existence of a piece of writing may be a spur to composition, whether the result be one of a series instituted by an original whose substance inspires further treatment, or a reply to a controversial original, or whether the literary success of one individual excites in another the same kind of ambition. To return to our former examples, in France of the sixteenth century,

conspicuous is the series of productions elaborating upon *L'Amic de Court* of la Borderie; and in the ferment of Italian Humanism in the quattrocento, among innumerable replies, important are Valla's *Antidotum* and *Apologus* and the *In calumniatorem Platonis* of Cardinal Bessarion. In none of these works is there an imitation of substance or form, though in each case the reason for being can be traced to the impetus given by a definite personality.

This study, then, resolves itself into a classification and discussion of the significance of the first imitations of Dante in Castilian in the verses of Imperial and his Sevillian contemporaries of the beginning of the fifteenth century, and in Catalan of the same century. It is especially important to determine the exact degree and character of this imitation, to make way for a more positive examination of the real constituents of Spanish allegory in this period and for a more securely founded comprehension of its later employment by Juan de Mena and Santillana and their successors.

II

IMPERIAL AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Previous writers upon this subject¹ have neglected to analyze the precise nature of the influence. Amador de los Rios,² who was the first to stress the Dantesque element in the works of Imperial, states emphatically the fact of the imitation, going even so far as to define it as double, of allegorical form and substance. "Pero sobre ser el *Desir á las syete Virtudes* en su estructura general una imitación tan palpable

¹ I mention in the text only significant articles. Of less import are: C. Vidal y Valenciano, *Imitadores, traductores y comentadores españoles de la Divina Comedia* (*Revista de España*, vol. ix (1869), pp. 219-223); Ferrazzi, *Enc. Dant.*, vol. iv, pp. 261-263 (notice of article of Vidal y Valenciano); Tiraboschi, *Stor. della let. ital.*, Milan, 1824, vol. vi, p. 1224; Amador, *Obras de Santillana*, Madrid, 1852, p. cxv; Scartazzini, *Dante Alighieri in Spanien* (*Magazin für die Literatur*, no. 52, 1870); M. de Puibusque, *Hist. de la litt. compar.*, vol. i, chap. ii, p. 95; R. Fernández Villaverde, *La escuela didáctica y la poesía política en Castilla durante el siglo xv*, Madrid, 1902, pp. 31, 33, 44. For the biography of Imperial, cf. M. Chaves, *Micer Francisco Imperial, Apuntes biobibliográficos*, Seville, 1899, p. 4; F. Rodríguez Marín, *L. Barahona de Soto*, Madrid, 1903, p. 124; B. Sanvisenti, *I primi influssi di Dante*, etc., p. 75, n. 29.

² Amador de los Rios, *Historia crítica de la literatura española*, vol. v, pp. 190-219 (noticed by Wolf, *Jahrbuch für rom. und eng. Lit.*, vol. v (1863), pp. 80 ff.).

de la *Divina Comedia*, apenas hay en él pasage alguno que no tenga su original en el *Purgatorio* ó en el *Paraiso*, partes á que por su misma indole principalmente se refiere." This comprehensive assertion, however, he leaves without further exegesis, except so much as may be gleaned from his elaborate digest of the *Decir*. He presents some of the parallel passages; and without analysis¹ mentions traces of the *Divine Comedy* in other works of Imperial. But in the extensive annotations to the text of his history he touches upon two important details: the analogy between the conception of the Spanish versifier and the early commentators on the Comedy²; and the use by Imperial of Dantesque meters.³ He concludes with an assertion of the final return of Imperial to Spanish methods, and with a qualified statement of his ill success in establishing a school: "no por eso dejaron de producir sus esfuerzos el fruto deseado respecto de la escuela alegórica y aun del gusto literario que representaba, señalándose entre los que abrazan una y otra los mas floridos ingenios que honraban á la sazón el nombre de Sevilla." ⁴

Puymaigre⁵ adds little to the critique of Amador. He acquiesces in Dante's importance in the introduction of allegorical expression in Spain, contrasting the elaborate and continuous allegories through a whole poem after Imperial's time with the earlier appearance in short, scattered, and isolated episodes. Wolf⁶ dwells upon Italian metrical influence. Baist⁷ distinguishes between the playfulness and superficiality of former allegory in the vernacular and its serious and extended employment by Imperial for a definite purpose. His conception is only another aspect of Puymaigre's view. Menéndez y Pelayo,⁸ in the eulogistic spirit of the Marquis of Santillana,⁹ dubbing Imperial the greatest poet of those who appear in the *Cancionero de Baena*, theorizes upon his wide erudition and culture (agreeing with

¹ Except in the short discussion of the "visión de los Siete Planetas" in a note (p. 203, n. 3). ² p. 198, n. 2. ³ p. 205, n. 1.

⁴ In the brief statement in his *Obras de Santillana*, p. cxv, Amador simply asserts emphatically that Imperial introduced the Dantesque vogue.

⁵ Puymaigre, *La Cour de Don Juan II*, vol. i, pp. 89-92.

⁶ F. Wolf, *Span. und port. nat. Literatur*, pp. 196 and 209.

⁷ G. Baist, *Geschichte der spanischen Literatur* (Groebner's Grundriss, vol. ii²), pp. 427-428.

⁸ Menéndez y Pelayo, *Antología de poetas líricos castellanos*, vol. iv, pp. lxvii ff.

⁹ *Proemio*, edition of *Obras* by Amador, p. 15.

Puymaigre that he knew English), upon his comprehension of the spirit of the *Divine Comedy*, and upon the consciousness of his effort to introduce Dantesque methods, and states that Imperial's indebtedness runs the whole gamut of the Italian poem. Of all these Amador alone has vouchsafed even so much as a superficial allusion to the exact nature and significance of the influence; their treatment has been rather of the fact and, to a slight degree, of the results of the imitation.

The three articles of Savi-Lopez¹ are of value, especially the last named, for their analysis of the use of allegory in the preceding centuries. The short statement of Ticknor² to the effect that though Imperial cites the authority of Dante and constantly refers to his works, yet his form is *not* essentially Dantesque, we shall find of greater import than is generally admitted.

Of the two more recent commentators, Sanvisenti,³ as far as can be gleaned from the scattered statements of his excursive style, believes that in the *Decir de las siete virtudes*,⁴ although Imperial's manipulation of allegory in comparison with Dante's is prosaic, the Dantesque influence predominates over the French; that the poem on the birth of John II. represents an earlier and more imperfect literary type, in which Imperial uses Dante as he would any other mediæval author; that in the poems to the lady Estrella Diana and upon Don Fernando, the relation comprises only a citation of Dante as an authority and Dantesque quotations; and that in the verses upon Free Will the influence is somewhat more complex. After a cursory examination⁵ of some of the pupils of Imperial, Sanvisenti comes to the conclusion that the Genoese poet,⁶

¹ P. Savi-Lopez, *Dantes Einfluss auf span. Dichter des XV Jhs.*, Naples, 1901 (noticed by Sanvisenti in *Gior. stor.*, vol. xxxix, 1902); *Un imitatore spagnuolo di Dante nel 1400* (*Gior. dant.*, vol. iii (1896), pp. 466-469, noticed in *Bull. della Società dant.*, n. s., vol. iii (1896), p. 61); *I precursori spagnuoli di Dante* (*Gior. dant.*, vol. iv, pp. 360-363, noticed in *Bull. della Società dant.*, n. s., vol. iv, 1896).

² Ticknor, *History of Spanish Literature*, vol. i, pp. 354-355. German trans., vol. i, pp. 312-340; vol. ii, p. 717. Spanish trans., vol. i, pp. 418, 459, 521, 554.

³ B. Sanvisenti, *I primi influssi di Dante, del Petrarca, e del Boccaccio sulla letteratura spagnuola* (Milan, 1902), pp. 33-79.

⁴ For the numbers of these poems in the *Cancionero de Baena*, see their detailed discussion, beginning with p. 9. ⁵ I shall analyze this more fully later.

⁶ As I have nothing to add to the previous scant biographical notices, I refer for such information to the works of Chaves, Marín, and Sanvisenti, and shall mention only those facts which have direct bearing upon the present topic.

through the works of whom, and not directly, most of his contemporaries knew Dante, is to be set above his school because through immediate knowledge of his original he placed before them a high model for imitation and because he *began* the Italian influence, even if it were only to emphasize such picturesque elements as were already present in the *Vida de Sta. Oria*, the *Libro de Alexandre*, or the *Milagros de Nuestra Señora*.

The tendency of Farinelli's critique upon Sanvisenti¹ is to outline the importance of French prototypes and to belittle the Italian elements. He points out that Imperial, as a pedant, could comprehend only the learning of Dante. Among French originals he mentions as forerunners to the *Decir de las siete virtudes* the *Dit des VII. serpens* of Robert de l'Oulme (circa 1266), and, again of a decade later, the *Livre des vices et des vertus* of Frère Lorens. He enumerates the elements of allegory which were brought into vogue by Imperial's compositions: the discussion of the *Seven Virtues*, appearing later in the works of Fernán Pérez de Guzmán, Santillana, Gómez Manrique, Diego de Burgos, Juan de Padilla, and Álvarez Guerrero; the conception of Fortune from the seventh Inferno; the *selva selvaggia*; the old man as guardian of Purgatory; the political invective of Sordello; and certain specific tropes and descriptions. His conclusion is that the writings of Imperial imply no vital influence, for the love of invective was deep-seated in the hearts of the Spanish people, and mysticism was rife in the monasteries; that the Spaniards preferred the more easily comprehended French visions, as is indicated in 1490 by Vicente de Maçuelo's version of the *Pèlerinage* of Guillaume de Deguileville; and that the trend of Santillana's *Proemio* is rather towards a greater admiration for the art of French poets of the fifteenth century, especially Alain Chartier.

An analytical examination of the verses of Imperial is likely to jeopardize for us the high estimate of the Sevillian poet that Santillana expresses in this same *Proemio*. "Passaremos á Miçer Françisco Imperial, al qual yo no llamaria deçidor ó trovador, mas poeta; cómo sea çierto que si alguno en estas partes del Occaso meresció premio de aquella triumphal é láurea guirlanda, loando á todos los otros, este fué."² Even admitting the inference of D. Tomás Sánchez³ that the phrase

¹ Farinelli, *Dante in Spagna* (*Giorn. stor.*, supplement, 1902-1905, no. 8).

² I quote from the text of Amador, p. 15.

³ T. A. Sánchez, *Col. de poes. cast.*, Madrid (1779), vol. i, p. 207.

"loando á todos los otros" denotes a certain composition in which Imperial passed in review his literary contemporaries (an interpretation which I agree with the editors of the *Cancionero de Baena*¹ in condemning as absurd), the antithetical emphasis upon *poeta*, followed by the award to him, if to any, of the laurel crown, is sufficient to exalt him above the rest; but we shall find it necessary, I fear, to seek the reason of the Marquis's extravagant praise in some other than the recognized canons of poetic worth.

The *Decir de las siete virtudes*, the most pretentious of Imperial's compositions, demands first consideration.² Distinct poetic inferiority is revealed in the attempt of Imperial to reduce the figurative language of Dante to direct but commonplace statement. I quote all the instances that occur in the *Decir* under discussion. First in the third stanza:

Quando á Marsías sus mienbros sacaste,
De la su vayna por la tu exçelencia,³

which is a paraphrase of:

Si come quando Marsia traesti,
Della vagina delle membra sue.

(*Par.* I, 20-21.)

Imperial's figure is less bold but more intelligible than Dante's, for it is more specific and easier to conceive of the limbs of Marsyas as drawn from their sheath, the skin, than of Marsyas himself as drawn from the sheath of his limbs. Dante expresses himself with less exactitude but more poetic vigor. This propensity for greater definiteness is manifested in the preceding line in the phrase, *expirame tu çiençia*, where again Dante in his simple *spira tue* is content merely with the expression of the fact of inspiration without specification of the thing inspired. It is all very well to ascribe these alterations to metrical exigencies; but it is not possible to neglect their significance, when it is found that virtually in every case they are in the direction of prosaic explicitness.

¹ P. 663, n. cxxxi.

² I shall treat only the elements in the several compositions which are necessary to the discussion. Elaborate résumés may be found in Amador, which Sanvisenti quite unnecessarily repeats.

³ For clearness' sake, I quote from the legible and metrically possible version given by Amador de los Rios, *Hist.*, vol. v, pp. 471 ff.; in two or three instances I have preserved the reading of the *Cancionero* because it seemed to me distinctly better.

Furthermore, lines 22-24 of the first *Paradiso*:

O divina virtù, se mi ti presti
Tanto che l' ombra del beato regno
Segnata nel mio capo io manifesti,

are paraphrased with complete loss of the splendid figure of the original :

. . . á mi memoria
Rrepresta un poco lo que me mostraste.

The figure of the spark, which in the Italian is expressed in a single line (34),

Poco favilla gran fiamma seconda,

is elaborated and explained in the Spanish through eight lines :

Que una çentella, sol de la tu gloria,
Pueda mostrar al pueblo presente,
E quiçá despues algunt grant prudente,
La ençenderá en más alta estoria.
Ca assy commo de poca sçentella
Algunas veses segundó gran fuego,
Quiçá segundè d' este sueño estrella
Que lusirá en Castiella con mi ruego.

Dante suggests the figure and allows the mind of the reader to exert itself in the application ; Imperial applies it for the reader two separate times. Dante passes directly to another very noble figure :

Forse dietro a me con miglior' voci
Si pregherà perçhè Cirra risponda.

Imperial, less daring, less fertile in invention, perhaps not learned enough to understand the reference to Cirrha, over attentive to clearness and consistency, extends the same figure of the spark to the preceding conception of the poet's wish to transmit his vision to his followers :

Que una çentella, sol de la tu gloria,
Pueda mostrar al pueblo presente,

and develops it carefully as a climax for the point under discussion :

Quiçá segunde d' este sueño estrella
Que lusirá en Castiella con mi ruego.

The ultradidactic and prosaic desire to leave nothing to the intuition of the reader is again evinced in the plain distinction that he makes between the cardinal and theological Virtues :

Las tres cantavan el su cantar santo
Las otras quatro el su moral canto . . .

The contrast between *moral* and *santo* leaves no doubt as to the significance of the seven starry damsels. But Dante, at the end of the twenty-ninth *Purgatorio*, is satisfied with the indication of a few apposite terms of description, leaving them to work their own suggestion in other minds. Indeed, no better example of diversity of method could be found than is afforded by a perusal of these two passages. Imperial expands into the minutest detail, nay, virtually into a complete *deitir*, what Dante compresses into four *terzine* :

Tre donne in giro, dalla destra ruota,
Venian danzando : l' una tanto rossa
Ch' a pena fôra dentro al fuoco nota ;
L' altr' era come se le carni e l' ossa
Fossero state di smeraldo fatte,
La terza pareva neve testè mosca ;
Ed or parevan dalla bianca tratte,
Or dalla rossa, e dal canto di questa
L' altre togliean l' andare e tarde e ratte.
Dalla sinistra quattro facean festa,
In porpora vestite, dietro al modo
D' una di lor, ch' aveva tre occhi in testa.¹

Imperial's prolix description of *Fortalesa* is especially to be noted ; and there is a further proof of what I have said about a fear of unintelligibility in the expansion and exaggeration of Dante's

La terza pareva neve testè mosca . . .
into
E las quatro eran albas pero atanto
Que la su albura á alba² nieve priva.

¹ *Purg.*, XXIX, 121-132.

² The affected repetition of the root of *alba*, doubtless, is for emphasis upon the figure, into which, for once, he has dared to jump, but such paronomasia is a rhetorical ornament much prized in the Middle Ages, and cultivated less flagrantly even by Dante.

I do not mean to suggest that Imperial is making a conscious imitation of this passage. The description is so different in well-nigh every detail, especially in the coloring of the various allegorical Virtues, that I think it doubtful whether the Spanish poet had these verses in mind even indistinctly. But the method in which they approach similar subjects is very significant, as characterizing the two separate casts of mind that are indicated by the mode of Imperial's actual imitation of Dante.

Imperial departs from the use of mystery, which is a legitimate constituent of poetry, and which Dante employs throughout the entire *Comedy*. The Italian poet wisely spreads a mist over the real physical nature of his vision; but the Spanish moralist in three separate places denominates his experience as a *sueño*: in the second stanza, *un grave sueño*; in the third, *en este sueño*; and in the fifth in the same terms. To be sure, as he approaches the beauties of the garden which seem rather those of the *Roman de la Rose*¹ than of the *Terrestrial Paradise*, he remembers St. Paul's² or Dante's³ words, interpolating incongruously, *Ca non se ssé sy dormia ó sy velava*; but this statement, in direct contradiction to what he has said before, like most afterthoughts, only causes confusion. The constant denomination of the *sueño* in the body of the work destroys the dramatic illusion and detracts from the reality of the substance of the vision. The opening stanza, likewise, is prosaic, artificial, and pedantic in the extreme. Imperial paraphrases a line of the *Purgatorio*,⁴

El tienpo perder pesa á quien mas sabe,

and then comments elaborately upon the line as a proper beginning, introducing into the midst, in Dantesque fashion, a complete line of Latin. It savors of the quaintness with which Dante comments upon his own verses in the *Vita Nuova*; but Dante does not impair the artistic structure of the *Divine Comedy* by thus sacrificing the continuity and dramatic illusion, except slightly and almost necessarily in those passages⁵ where he entreats the reader to study deeply the

¹ Cf. T. B. Luquiens, "The Roman de la Rose and Mediæval Castilian Literature," *Rom. Forsch.*, vol. xx, p. 302. When it seems necessary I have referred to articles that have appeared after this paper was put together; in general, however, I have reserved all new material for my future study.

² 2 Cor. xii. 2-3.

⁴ III, 78.

³ *Inf.*, I, 10.

⁵ As *Purg.*, VIII, 19-21.

meaning of the allegory. The passage in the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, on the other hand, seems to have but the flimsiest kind of a connection with the body of the composition.

Menéndez y Pelayo's eulogies of Imperial, then, following those of the Marquis of Santillana, do not seem to me justifiable. His constant lapse into prosaic pedantry, the numerous attempts to substitute an exegesis for the emphatic figurative language of the Italian, preclude any claim to high poetic fame. I doubt whether the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, even in spots, is the result of poetic inspiration. Some lines or passages, to be sure, are transferred rather skillfully from their Dantesque connection. So the three theological Virtues are endowed with the attribute of Beatrice : ¹

Vestita di color di fiamma viva,

where the Spanish is :

Las tres avien color de llama viva.

Or the characteristics of the sages in Limbo are given to the guide Dante :

Di grande autorità ne' lor sembianti

becoming

De grant abtoridat avia senblante.

Or finally, the effect of Dante's contemplation of Beatrice :

Nel suo aspetto tal dentro mi fei,
Qual si fe' Glauco nel gustar dell' erba,
Che il fe' consorto in mar degli altri dei,²

is paralleled by the transformation of Imperial as he gazes at the allegorical stars :

Enpero atanto sí que á mí movian
Qual movió Glauco por gustar la yerva
Por qué fué fecho de una conserva
Con los díoses que la mar rregian.

On the other hand, the guide Dante, who is constructed of elements drawn from the Virgil and Cato of the *Divine Comedy*, seems strangely incongruous amidst the luxuriance of a French allegorical garden ; the

¹ *Purg.*, XXX, 33.

² *Par.*, I, 67-69.

presence of Leah (though it affords the opportunity for a bad pun and *rime équivoquée*)¹ has a very dubious connection with the rest of the composition; and the splitting of hairs over the question of the equality of the Virtues despite their variance is petty and plainly lugged in as a puerile attempt at Dantesque methods. Again, the figure used by Dante to denote the destitution of the Roman Empire,

Che val perchè ti racconciasse il freno
Giustiniano, se la sella è vuota?²

is dragged in almost without meaning:

Mira las riendas é ansy mira el freno
é sy en ty queda sano algun pedaço;

and the obscure connection of

Á ty averná commo á fermosa dueña,
Que con dar vueltas su dolor amansa,

makes it doubtful whether Imperial even comprehended the significance of the figure in the *Divine Comedy*.³ The whole invective against Seville, indeed, is a most artificial compilation from the opening of the twenty-sixth *Inferno* and the arraignment of Italy and especially Florence in the sixth *Purgatorio*.

It is furthermore seriously to be questioned whether any of the *Decir* is the outcome of original inspiration. The rose garden with the brook is clearly French, or at least the general property of the Middle Ages attaining its most conspicuous development in France. The introduction of the allegorical figure of Dante as guide, the voices in the air speaking Latin,⁴ and the group of allegorical stars would seem to be reminiscences of the *Divine Comedy*. It is possible, even, that some commentary which Imperial may have chanced to read concerning the four stars of the

¹ Qual quier qu'el mi nonbre demanda
Ssepa por cierto que me llamo Lya, . . .
¡ Non oyes Lia con canto graciosso
Que d' estas flores ssu guirlanda lya?

² *Purg.*, VI, 89-90.

³ Vedrai te simigliante a quella inferma
Che non può trovar posa in su le piume
Ma con dar volta suo dolore scherma (*Purg.*, VI, 149-151).

⁴ Cf. *Purg.*, XIII.

opening canto of the *Purgatorio* may have suggested to him the composition of the *Decir*. It is to be noted, also, that the ninth *Purgatorio*,¹ from which the Sevillian master extracts

É en color era la su vestidura
Çenisa ó tierra, que seca se cave,

contains the description of the entrance into Purgatory proper, which is slightly analogous to Imperial's description of the entrance into his garden. In glancing over the Canto, he may have caught up the quoted line. Similar considerations would conduce to a belief that the *Virgen salva*, with which the work concludes,² is derived from the seventh³ *Purgatorio* instead of the thirty-third *Paradiso*, for it is here that Dante introduces the serpents, which, it is not unlikely, together with those in the *Diit* of Robert de l'Oulme, influenced Imperial to adopt a similar device. We have now little left that smacks in the slightest degree of the hand of a poet, unless it be the conception of Discretion as the mother of the cardinal Virtues and the really effective simile used at the appearance of Dante:

E commo quando entre árboles asome
Alguno, que ante los sus ramos mesçe.

But I little doubt that, as has been done for the other material of the poem, prototypes might be discovered for these bright spots; in any case they are not sufficient to save the whole composition, which in its essence is nothing more than a pedantically minute allegorical presentation of an Aristotelian catalogue of Virtues.

"In its essence," I have said. It cannot be doubted that the chief purpose of the *Decir de las siete virtudes* is didactic, and the didacticism is embodied in the analysis of the seven virtues and their opposing vices. The vision, which precedes the explication of the nature of the allegorical persons, is simply preparatory, and indeed, though somewhat extended, absolutely unnecessary to the main purpose. It is only a pretty decoration that lures the reader to examine the more serious contents. It can be said to characterize the work no more than the anecdote which the mediæval preacher grafted into his sermon to hold the attention of his audience. The Dantesque imitations are, for the

¹ Line 115.

² Line 82.

³ Sanvisenti expresses a doubt upon this point in a note on page 75.

most part, of form, — unessential at that, since they are merely gratuitous ornaments of the French allegorical framework. His substance, except in the imitation of the tirade against Florence and in the very fact that it is allegorical in so far as the moralizing is put in the mouth of an allegorical figure, is not influenced by the *Divine Comedy*. At no point is it Dante's purpose to define or analyze the seven Virtues, but together with all the rest of the tradition of the Middle Ages he has incorporated them into the one great final object of his poem. Nor can it be contended that the piece is an imitation, but an imitation of only a small division, of the great prototype. It must be insisted that at no point do the aims of the two writers coincide; the exaltation of the Virtues is the end and essence of the *Decir*; but Dante introduces them only as details of his allegorical procession, and indeed never descends in the poem itself to minute explanation of allegory. I have already pointed out that it is even doubtful whether the author in his conception of the Virtues had the Dantesque passage in mind. The translation of a few scattered lines or *terzine*, introduced sometimes incongruously and illogically to form a political invective, cannot justify the assertion that the substance of the Spanish poem is an imitation of the Italian. The great mass of substance is derived from the general mediæval stock of erudition.

Nor is the form itself Dantesque in the sense of the *Dittamondo*. Fazio degli Uberti describes a long journey, never once letting go his hold upon the framework of the *Divine Comedy*, though his substance and purpose are quite opposed and inferior to those of Dante. Even Christine de Pisan clings closely to her original in her apotheosis of Reason and Charles V of France. But the form of the *Decir* is to be ascribed in a much larger degree to general mediæval antecedents than specifically to the *Divine Comedy*. The garden is no more Italian than French, and those elements derived from Dante are only accessories and in no way determine its essential nature; when once the writer has entered upon the treatment of the Virtues, the main division of the work, he has forsaken, except in the closing stanzas, the Dantesque form for good and all. The vision is only a preparatory device, the chief constituents of which are by no means to be sought in the *Divine Comedy*.

A still further limitation is to be made. There is a discrepancy in the use itself of allegory by the two writers. The literal sense in the

Divine Comedy is a complete, engrossing narrative, coexisting with the three figurative interpretations. In the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, as soon as the explication of the allegorical persons begins, the literal sense is absolutely submerged in the moral; and in the preceding vision the figurative sense of many of the details, if indeed it exists at all, is very loosely and obscurely related to the following catalogue of virtues and vices. Imperial's clumsy weaving appears childishly simple beside the intricate perfection of Dante's fabric.

A slight, fragmentary, interrupted, and inorganic imitation of form characterizes the influence of Dante upon Imperial for the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, and classifies the work, at a much lower grade, in the division of the *Dittamondo* and the *Chemin de longue étude*. A poem of about the same time and of much the same nature, which itself has been the subject of extended disputation, will perhaps, by comparison, assist in elucidation. I refer to Chaucer's *House of Fame*. Written about 1385, the poem, like so many allegorical productions of the Middle Ages, is a vision. It used to be the fashion to parcel it off as an imitation of the *Divine Comedy* for certain superficial reasons, such as the presence of a guide, the invocations at the beginning of each of the three books, or the fact that the opening of Book III is an actual paraphrase of the first *Paradiso*.¹ Such details as the two first, since they have proved to be literary commonplaces of the period, have dwindled into insignificance; and the Dantesque elements, which are confined to a few details, prove only that Chaucer knew the *Divine Comedy*, but that the *House of Fame* is not an imitation but a member of the same class.² The same assertion can be made for the *Decir* of Imperial: as a whole it is not an imitation of Dante; certain passages are imitative in form, and in that it is an allegory and partly a vision, it might be placed in the same broad technical division of literature.

In the discussion of this work I have made evident, I trust, the distinction between sure verbal imitations and possible general reminiscences.

¹ The chief exponent of this attitude is Adolf Rambeau, Chaucer's *House of Fame* in seinem Verhältniss zur *Divina Commedia*, *Eng. Stud.*, vol. iii, pp. 209 ff.

² The latest and fullest exposition of this point of view, combating emphatically and in detail Rambeau's farfetched analogies, is to be found in W. O. Sypherd, *Studies in Chaucer's House of Fame*, Publications of the Chaucer Society, 1907, for the issue of 1904, pp. 44-72, *et passim*. A bibliography of the question is given in the notes on pages 13 and 14.

The former can be asserted only in the case of close translation at least for the space of a line, when it becomes highly improbable that two men should independently have written the same words. Possible reminiscence passes into certainty when definite identical features occur in two works in great numbers or in the same arrangement. In the stanzas on the birth of John II we shall find unquestionable verbal and unquestionable general imitations very rare.

The same traits are manifest as in the former work. He is prosaic again in allusion to his composition within the composition itself, as in the thirteenth stanza: "Commo adelante va metrificado." A poverty of invention is apparent by a repetition of much of the material of the *Decir de las siete virtudes*. A garden, transported from the literary commonplaces of France, is once more the seat of the vision. There are voices in the air; the doubt as to the reality of the vision expressed in diction almost identical with that used before:

Non sé sy velava, nin sé sy dormia;

parallel passages in the description of the garden, as:

(*Virtudes*) El son del agua en la dulçor passava
Harpa, dulçayna, con vyhuela d'arco,

compared with

(*Juan II*) El rronper del agua eran tenores
Que con las dulçes aves concordavan,
En bozes baxas é de las mayores
Duçaynas é farpes otro sy sonnavan,

or

(*Virtudes*) Oliendo del jardin dulçes olores,

compared with

(*Juan II*) Oliendo las flores por medio del prado.

Again, there is the invocation of Apollo, the close analogy of the starry females, and, above all, the dull, regular, extended explanation of the characteristics of the allegorical figures. The pedantic propensity is well exemplified by the extremely artificial introduction, in the second stanza, of three languages. The very fact that exact verbal imitation of Dante is very infrequent renders it impossible to bring into relief any

instances where Imperial has sacrificed the figurative diction of the original for the sake of a clear explanation of the conception.

These exact imitations reduce themselves to

A guissa de dueña que estava de parto

of the first stanza, from the twentieth *Purgatorio*,¹ and possibly the

De linage en linage, de gentes en gentes,

from the harangue of Fortune, to be traced to the seventh *Inferno*:

Di gente in gente e d' uno in altro sangue.²

Imperial's whole conception of Fortune may be derived from this passage in the *Divine Comedy*. Sanvisenti³ also suggests as a possible reminiscence the catalogue of heroes,

Al grant Macabeo é al gran Çeplon,
Al buen Josué,

which, when we consider the frequency of such lists in the Middle Ages, is very doubtfully to be referred to the eighteenth *Paradiso*;⁴ and I myself would add the manifestation of joy by the planets through greater effulgence, — a detail which, though no direct verbal relation is discernible, seems to originate in Dantesque methods. Finally, Imperial steps out of his narrative for a specific comparison with the *Inferno*,

Non vido Aliger tan gran asonsiego
En el oscuro limbo espiramentado.
En el grant colegio del maestro griego
Col el mantuano ser poetizado . . . ,

and once again when he parallels the joy of the Sun at addressing him to that of Beatrice in heaven smiling upon "el poeta jurista, teologo Dante." And it is this respect for Dante that makes luminous the personality of Imperial, even though his pages are dull with the utter humdrum of mediæval didacticism. We can read it in the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, when he naïvely invests Dante with the attributes of Cato in

¹ Line 19.

² Line 80.

³ P. 76, note 36.

⁴ Lines 37-42.

Purgatory, as if white hairs and the burden of years were the attributes proper to the dignity of genius :

Era en la vista benigno é suave . . .
 Barba é cabello albo syn medida
 Traya un libro de poca escriptura
 Escripto todo con oro muy fino,
 É comenzaba : En medio del camino,
 É del laurel corona é çentura.
 De grant abtoridat avia senblante,
 De poeta de grant exçellençia,
 Onde omilde enclinéme delante,
 Faciéndole devyda reverençia ;

or his adulation is to be read between the lines in the affection with which he culls here and there in the shining meadow of the *Divine Comedy*.

The *Decir* on the birth of John II is, then, so similar to that on the seven Virtues that it is to be technically classified as the same kind of imitation, although the word *imitation* is a misnomer. The translation of isolated bits of subject-matter is reduced to a minimum, and the influence of Dantesque form is to be sought only in scattered details, the relation of all but one or two of which is in itself doubtful. Imperial has here followed his own or the general mediæval method, punctuating it at intervals with reminiscences of Dantesque form. If it were not for these foreign slashes of the brush, the finished picture would present a composition of the purely mediæval type, such as we shall find in the productions of his pupils.

One of the shorter compositions of Imperial, indeed, exhibits in its six stanzas a somewhat closer relation to the *Divine Comedy*. I refer to the *respuesta* to Fernán Sánchez Calavera upon the mediæval crux of the compatibility of free will and divine omniscience.¹ There are three unquestionable direct verbal imitations : one, concerning the difficulty of expressing his experience in words, from Dante's language in the first *Paradiso*²:

Nin segunt Dante trasumanar,
 Podria lengua por bien que fable ;

again, from the discussion of the limits of the human mind :³

Menester non fuera parir Maria ;

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 521.

² Line 70.

³ *Purg.*, III, 39.

and lastly from Dante's discussion of the dependency of human actions upon the influence of the heavens :¹

Sy assí non fuera, fuera menguado
En nos alvedrio, é en Dios justiçia
Dar por mal pena é por bien letiçia.

There is no Dantesque reminiscence in the philosophical concept of Imperial, that to the mind of God there is no time, that for Him neither blessed nor cursed are born or die. He approaches the manner of Dante,² however, in his comment upon the two Latin sentences : "Major non surrexit" and "Set nobis aspexit." The *respuesta* is related to the *Divine Comedy* only in isolated fragments of substance ; the *Decir* on the birth of John II differs only in that there are two or three touches taken from Dante's form, although in the longer work Imperial's recollections of Dante are fewer and less vivid.

The first *Decir* upon the lady whom he dubs Estrella Diana³ contains three possible reminiscences : the line

Propio me paresçe al que dixo : Ave,

which should rather be referred to the *Purgatorio*, X, 40 than with Sanvisenti⁴ to the *Paradiso*, III, 121 ; the emphasis upon the smile of the beloved :

El su graçioso é onesto rysso ;

and the lines

Callen poetas é callen abtores,
Omero, Oraçio, Vergilio é Dante,
E con ellos calle Ovidio *D'amante* . . .

which, though the thought is by no means so extraordinary as to preclude original invention, may be derived from the twenty-fifth *Inferno*⁵ :

Taccia Lucano omai . . .
Taccia di Cadmo e d'Aretusa Ovidio.

The main substance and form of the work, however, are not Dantesque, unless it is to be supposed that Imperial caught the idea of a meeting

¹ *Purg.*, XVI, 70.

² Cf. *Para.*, XIII, 31-III, the discussion of "A veder tanto non surse il secondo."

⁴ P. 77, note 41.

³ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 231.

⁵ Lines 94, 97.

with his lady from the *Vita Nuova*. But the conception is very common in mediæval French verse; and the tone of the four stanzas, with the stress upon a comparison of the lady to a rose,

Rossa novela de Oliente jardin, . . .
E commo la rrosa entre las flores . . .
Nasçe á los veses muy oliente rrosa,

savors rather of the poem of Guillaume de Lorris. It is the first work which we have examined that can lay claim to artistic unity and grace, but we may well query the originality of its sources, and at any rate it becomes petty at the end in its double exhortation to Enfregymia (Iphigenia?)¹ and Helen to refrain from jealousy.

The second address to Diana in defense against the attacks upon the first² is frankly of the Provençal or Galician type. There is the Court of Love before which Imperial is summoned for his extravagant language; and the conclusion is a series of elaborate conceits in which the knight is armed allegorically by the traits of his mistress. In 238 of the *Cancionero de Baena* his addiction to the old school becomes more apparent in the final outburst:

O tú poetria é gaya çiençia!

for the latter phrase is the technical appellation of the Galician genre. The four stanzas in which he begs off in his fear of succumbing to the charms of Isabel Gonçalves³ continue in the vein of the troubadors. None of these three shows a trace of the influence of the *Divine Comedy*.

The *requesta* directed to Fray Alfonso de la Monja⁴ is the sort of complaint which Dante suggests is made against Fortune:

Quest' è colei ch' è tanto posta in croce
Pur da color che le dovrian dar lode.⁵

The lines

Que non ha vista que te vea
Nin sseso que se provea . . .

would seem clearly reminiscent of

Oltra la difension de' senni umani;⁶

¹ Cf. *Cancionero de Baena*, p. 668, n. cxxxv.

² *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 234.

³ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 239.

⁴ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 245.

⁵ *Inf.*, VII, 91-92.

⁶ *Inf.*, VII, 81.

and

Tan oculta te contienes

of

Che è occulto come in erba l' angue.¹

Being a complaint, the verses are in direct opposition to the lofty ideal of Dante, as is recognized by Imperial in the final statement :

E maquer que te alabe
E escuse en su estilo
Dante que tanto bien sabe,
Segunt yo ley é vylo . . .

The Dantesque conception of Fortune, which seems to prevail somewhat in the *Decir* on the birth of the young prince, inasmuch as he here specifically recants from such a position, cannot be said to have exerted any permanent influence upon the mind of Imperial. But the praise of Dante's erudition is to be noted, and especially the assertion of a direct knowledge of the *Divine Comedy*.

The answer of Imperial to the monk's reply,² though subtly handled, has no bearing upon the question at issue. The verses describing an encounter with a French lady³ are of some importance, first, for a possible reminiscence :

Segunt qu' el minor se omilla, . . .

to be compared with

Ed abbracciolo ove il minor s' appiglia ;⁴

and, secondly, for another imitation of his own matter, in the similarity of the meeting with that of the Estrella Diana. In the stanzas in praise of Don Fernando, king of Aragon,⁵ there is a further repetition of the material of the first Estrella composition in

E vy al que dixo "Ave" ;

and, as in this work, Dante is grouped without ado among the great poets of antiquity. There seems, again, to be some trace of the method

¹ *Inf.*, VII, 83.

² *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 247.

³ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 248.

⁴ *Purg.*, VII, 15.

⁵ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 249.

of the great Italian¹ in the mysterious mention of historical or mythological figures through their stories rather than by name, as of Amphion in

E del que amuró las villas
Solo con su hablar gracioso.

General statements about the position of Imperial are somewhat dependent upon his reputation as a scholar, emphasized so strongly by Menéndez y Pelayo and Farinelli.² To be sure, even more than his contemporaries, he constantly indulges in the quotation of Latin. The *Decir* on the seven Virtues bristles with Latin sentences, and the mannerism spreads through the whole mass of his works. I have already noted the pedantic introduction of three languages into the second stanza of the verses upon the birth of John II;³ but the English and Arabic are exceedingly deficient, either by fault of the author or copyist, and at any rate the feat of quoting a single line from a foreign language is paralleled by the gamins on the street, all of whom are familiar enough with corruptions of *parlez-vous français?* Imperial's whole manner, indeed, is that of the young lad who with difficulty learns from his elders a line of French that he may flaunt it before his less lucky playmates. A working knowledge of Latin was no marvel in those days; and its excessive use by Imperial in imitation of Dante is probably an illustration of the everlasting tendency of all pupils to exaggerate into vices the mannerisms of the master. The French used by the lady whom he meets upon the banks of the Guadalquivir is again confused; but even if we are to attribute this fault to the ignorance of the copyist, there is all the likelihood in the world that the lines are transferred bodily from some French poem; or, all other explanations failing, there is no occasion for wonderment if a versifier of those days knew the language in which ordinary mediæval allegory had found so conspicuous a development. The controversial discussion of Free Will and Fortune, to which he gave expression in one of his shorter works, exhibits no illumination above that of his fellows. On the other hand, in the *Decir de las siete virtudes* there is a plain slip in the separation of Phœbus and Apollo into two deities — no more serious, however, than many of

¹ Cf. the introduction of S. Francis, *Par.*, XI, 50-54.

² Cf. above, p. 6, note 8; p. 8, note 1.

³ Menéndez y Pelayo, it seems to me, wrongly lays great stress upon this passage.

which Chaucer is guilty.¹ In this whole matter, indeed, there is again an analogy between these two mediæval writers. Both seem to have been versed in the French and Italian productions of the day, but to have shared in the almost universal ignorance of the true meaning of the Greek and Roman classics. Dante, though his comprehension of their proper position may have been no more enlightened, yet in his vastly broader and more intelligent erudition would not have been betrayed into such blunder. Imperial, though with all his contemporaries he displays some knowledge of the Ptolemaic system, yet appears often to slink away from the task of interpreting the *Divine Comedy* in some other particulars, as when he skips lines 16-18 of the first *Paradiso*:

Infino a qui l'un giogo di Parnaso
Assai mi fu, ma or con ambedue
M'è uopo entrar nell'aringo rimasto.

It may be urged that Imperial could not work this idea into the matter of his own composition, but, as I have already pointed out, he has achieved the task of inserting material no less incongruous, and the omission becomes more significant when, at lines 35-36, he again avoids the same classical allusion, developing rather the figure of the potentiality of a spark of flame. In his transformation of the passage of the *Paradiso* he also neglects the difficult *terzine* from 28 to 33. With these lapses in mind I cannot be brought to place Imperial's erudition above that of the other Sevillian versifiers. One instance has already been indicated in which it is doubtful whether Imperial comprehended the significance of the lines that he quoted; and when to this evidence are added the tendency to avoid difficult passages and the incongruity with which he sometimes introduces his plagiarisms, I should take decided umbrage at Menéndez y Pelayo's assertions in regard to Imperial's illuminated comprehension of the *Divine Comedy*.

What conclusions, then, are to be drawn from this examination of the sources, the methods, and the character of our much-lauded hero? It has become evident, I trust, that in no single case has there occurred a sufficiently important imitation of substance to deserve the name. This condition becomes more palpable when we view some real imitations

¹ Cf. the feminine Marsyas in the *House of Fame*:

And Marcia that lost her skin (v. 1229).

of substance, as Benivieni's new investiture of the *De Theologica Platonica* and Chaucer's use of the tale of Griselda, or, united with imitation of form, Ronsard's *Franciade* or his use of the Anacreontic upon the storm-driven Cupid. The final statements in regard to the *Decir de las siete virtudes* applies with greater force to his other works. The imitation of form, which in the first *Decir* can be asserted at best only for the introduction (and even here the French influence is of much greater importance), becomes more and more fragmentary in the minor compositions until finally it appears only in isolated lines. There is a continually decreasing scale from the *Decir de las siete virtudes* through the verses on John II, Free Will, and the Estrella Diana until we discover compositions entirely in the style of the *gaya ciencia*. Whether the Galician or Italian type is chronologically precedent affects the question but slightly; the fact remains that Imperial's extant verses contain but an insignificant, unsystematic, and unessential imitation of the *Divine Comedy*.

The case of Chaucer is once more of assistance. I have already indicated that the *House of Fame* is to be considered as a member of the same species as the *Divine Comedy* with slight reminiscences of Dante. In the prologue to the *Second Nun's Tale*, the hymn to the Virgin is transcribed from the thirty-third *Paradiso*; and in all,¹ Dante seems to have affected about one hundred lines of Chaucer's work. Now no one would think of classifying Chaucer as a Dantista; and yet the translation of a long hymn, the use of briefer citations, and the indebtedness of the *House of Fame* entitle him to the name as much as Imperial, in whose works can be discovered no such unbroken quotation as this laud of the Virgin. Though Chaucer twice plunges into *terza rima*, the force of his genius was not sufficient to mold these isolated instances into a canon for English verse. How can we expect more from the infinitely inferior literary personality of Imperial? Although the *Decir de las siete virtudes* abounds in hendecasyllables, and the minor works exhibit them in no infrequency, nothing tangible results, for Spanish literature had to wait for their permanent establishment until the activity of Juan Boscán and Garcilaso de la Vega.

Before we have examined the productions of his contemporaries and successors, it is perilous to make any absolute assertion about the

¹ A. W. Pollard, *Chaucer*, p. 84.

permanent influence of Imperial himself; but ere this, I trust, some of the opinions vouchsafed by the several critics have begun to appear somewhat unstable. Amador's summary of the *Decir de las siete virtudes*, "apenas hay en él pasage alguno que no tenga su original en el *Purgatorio* o en el *Paraiso*," is, to speak with charity, an unwarranted exaggeration. Puymaigre's and Baist's comment evidently has but little bearing upon the point at issue. Inasmuch as the characteristic note and great mass of Imperial's work is not Dantesque, it is futile, as will appear in the discussion of his "school," to make Dante responsible for the extension of the use of allegory from isolated episodes to whole compositions or for the transformation of its nature from playful to serious; and it would seem an anomaly if a man of such meager attainment as Imperial should, apart from a transmission of the influence of Dante, in the power of his own personality, effect a revolution by dint of establishing his own or French methods.

I have already taken exception to Menéndez y Pelayo's theories about the erudition and comprehension of the Sevillian versifier. Two other opinions of his are open to grave doubt. It can scarcely be said that Imperial's indebtedness runs the whole gamut of the *Divine Comedy*. His range in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* seems to be fairly unrestricted; but his relation to the *Paradiso* needs further elucidation. The *Decir de las siete virtudes* presents certain familiarity with only the first and last cantos.¹ Sanvisenti² himself admits that the *Tu argomentas* is by no means necessarily to be traced to the third canto of the *Paradiso*. In the verses upon the birth of John II it has already been suggested that the group of heroes and the reference to Gabriel may be taken from other sources. The idea of heavenly joy depicted by more brilliant refulgence probably comes from a perusal of the *Divine Comedy*, for in one passage, although there is no allusion to light, Imperial makes a definite comparison to the joy of Beatrice at Dante's queries, and in other passages, though without specific allusion to the Italian poem, the planets actually glow with greater brightness when they address the author. The reference to Beatrice as arbiter in the verses on predestination may be derived either from the *Paradiso* or *Purgatorio*. In any case, the reminiscence, in either of these instances, is only general and indirect. As the shorter productions exhibit no relation whatsoever to

¹ Cf. note, p. 59.

² Note 21.

the *Paradiso*, there exists no evidence for more than a very general and limited acquaintance with any part of that Cantica, and no *certain* evidence for a verbal acquaintance with more than the first and last cantos. The possibility that Imperial shrank from the *Paradiso* because it is more difficult of comprehension would tip the scale still farther against a belief in Imperial's intelligence and erudition; and Menéndez y Pelayo's assertion of the breadth of Imperial's reading in Dante is incapable of proof.

Great shadow has already been cast over his poetic claims, so firmly championed by the same critic. I have hinted that it is doubtful how much of his matter is to be attributed to his own invention. His gardens are laden with the fragrance of the north; his streams sparkle and murmur as if risen on the other slope of the Pyrenees; and the fair but dreary damsels who dwell thereby prate the lessons they have conned in France. The composition¹ quoted by the commentators upon the *Cancionero* as drawn from the *Cancionero manuscrito de S. M.* is the most complete expression of Imperial's indebtedness. The writer in an arbor of roses is wounded by the darts of his mistress and dragged away captive. The tale is told with an elaborate dilation upon the varied beauties of the lady, and generally throughout with all the conventional mediæval machinery, until it is hard to believe that we are not perusing a translation of some undiscovered French original. But what if he has skillfully remodeled and rearranged this borrowed finery? I fear we cannot grant him even that. In the shorter pieces when the difficulty is not so great, or where with some degree of probability a direct translation may be assumed, unity is not seriously violated; but the *Decir de las siete virtudes* has in the preceding pages yielded under examination glaring incongruities, and the whole preliminary vision, when the piece is compared to so compact an entity as Ribera's *débat* upon Poverty, does not appear æsthetically necessary. In the latter work but half a dozen lines are devoted to the introductory details of the dream, with the result that a consistent attention to the main topic is apparent from beginning to end; and by contrast the inordinate length of the introductory vision and the unrelated details give the *Decir* on the seven Virtues the aspect of an extremely ill-pieced crazy-quilt.

In the light of the foregoing examination, Sanvisenti's belief in a preponderance of Dantesque influence over the French becomes untenable;

¹ A discussion of this work is strangely neglected by all critics.

Farinelli's stress upon French sources and upon the love of the Spanish for French allegory is needed as a corrective. We shall have occasion to indorse Farinelli's conclusions in the discussion of the so-called school of Imperial.

As a transition, the argument from antecedent probability is here of some importance. Is it likely that this rhymester neither endowed by nature with an unusual wit nor blessed with excessive erudition, a foreigner by extraction or birth, should be the father of a literary tradition?

Ruy Paes de Ribera deserves first consideration as the pretended chief inheritor of this conditional legacy.¹ It will perhaps be wiser to examine his compositions in detail before studying his general reputation. The débat concerning the preëminence of Poverty as a curse² has been groundlessly ascribed to Dantesque influence. The mere fact that Ribera devotes the four opening lines to the description of a gloomy valley as the environment of his discussion is of absolutely no probative force. It is the natural spot for these four curses of humanity, Grief, Old Age, Exile, and Poverty, and a commonplace of mediæval visions; and with no less propriety the heath of the witches in *Macbeth* might be compared to the *selva oscura* of the first *Inferno*. The use of the word *oscura* is the only point of resemblance — an accident without any significance whatsoever; and, on the other hand, the heaping of adjectives in asyndeton is absolutely foreign to Dante's method:

En un espantable, cruel, temeroso
Valle oscuro, muy fondo, aborrido
Açerca de un lago firviente espantoso
Turbio, muy triste, mortal, dolorido.

Throughout the whole work there does not occur a single reminiscence of the *Divine Comedy*; and this absence is especially remarkable when we consider that the allegorical female figure of Dante's symbolical dream at the opening of the nineteenth *Purgatorio*, if Ribera had any acquaintance with the *Comedy*, would almost surely have suggested to him some details for his analogous personalities. Again one expects in

¹ The "school of Imperial" is treated directly after Imperial in the general works mentioned on pages 5-8.

² *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 290.

vain that the description of Exile will bring forth some Dantesque recollections. Ribera, if he follows Imperial at all, follows him rather in that characteristic which he does not derive from the *Divine Comedy* — the analysis of the minutest allegorical characteristics.

The *Decir* on the occasion of the choice of regents for the young Don Juan¹ may be modeled at the beginning on Imperial's composition for the birth of the same king. The *Decir* on Fortune² is completely at variance with the high ideal of Dante. Ribera, neglecting altogether her relation to God and the providential government of the universe, dwells only on her dealings with men, conceiving her with low pessimism simply as the companion of the rich and the curse of the poor. Nor does the longer débat between Soberbia and Mesura³ exhibit any relation to the *Divine Comedy*. The painstaking delineation of Pride and her daughters is in the manner of Imperial; or it might as reasonably be maintained that Imperial follows the lead of Ribera, for the critics seem to have assumed *a priori* that Ribera is the literary offspring of Imperial. Soberbia and Mesura present their pleas, Justicia passes judgment, and assigns Mesura and the other virtues to the train of Don Juan. The composition from beginning to end is characterized by what we denominate indefinitely as the French manner. There are battles of Virtue and Vice in Spain as early as the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius.⁴ In France, the name of such allegorical contests is legion; virtually the whole *Roman de la Rose* is built upon elements involving the disagreement of many different types of allegorical personifications. Number 291 of the *Cancionero de Baena* is another lawsuit over the evils of poverty. The rhymed confession⁵ does not present a classification of sin according to the Dantesque system. No knowledge of Dante is implied in that the invective against Pride chances to mention, as in the *Purgatorio*,⁶ Lucifer as the first instance of the punishment of that sin, for he would naturally be the first suggestion to the mediæval mind. In the *Decir* against Miguel Ruys Thesorero⁷ the mention of the three physicians, "Ipocras, Gallyeno, tambien Avyçena," in the same order as

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 289 (a).

⁵ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 293.

² *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 289 (b).

⁶ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 298.

³ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 288.

⁷ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 300.

⁴ A. Puech, *Prudence*, Paris, 1888 (p. 255), comments upon the popularity of this poem.

in the *Inferno*, IV, 142, is not indicative of an acquaintance with the great Italian. An identity in the components and arrangement of such lists, by reason of their frequency in the Middle Ages, is again of no significance.

The only work in which there hovers the slightest fragrance of the *Divine Comedy* is placed in direct contrast to the rest of Ribera's productions by its palpable optimism.¹ A heavenly appearance, denoted by an effervescence of light, stands before his bed and asks him whether he sleeps or is awake,

Sy dormia ó sy velava,

or whether he is lost in meditation,

O que era en lo que estava
En mi cabo comidiendo.

Aroused, he makes the excuse that he was stricken with terror by the evils of the world; whereupon the unearthly messenger enumerates to him the necessary qualities for a prosperous nation and its king. There is the remotest possibility that the *un resplandor*, the appellation of the angel, is a Dantesque image,² still clinging to Ribera's consciousness. It is at present difficult to determine whether the lines

Quando dixo el angel: Ave

and

Sy dormía ó sy velava

originated in Imperial or Ribera; but inasmuch as the former has translated not a few passages from the *Divine Comedy* and Ribera otherwise none, it is reasonable to suppose that Ribera drew them from Imperial, especially as he may have imitated him in his *Decir* on the regents; and thus the only ground in this piece for concluding that Ribera had read Dante is the denomination of the spirit as a refulgence — rather insufficient for the construction of a literary theory.

Practically, there is no trace of an acquaintance with the *Divine Comedy*. I have discussed all the compositions in which the question could conceivably arise. It is possible that in the setting of his piece on the regents and in the work last examined, for a pair of lines, he is indebted to Imperial. The use of Latin may or may not come from Imperial; his habit of employing it for the conclusion of a piece

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 295. These verses hitherto have been strangely disregarded.

² Cf. *Par.*, III, 118, *et passim* in the *Paradiso*.

casts the presumption against the former alternative. His analysis of allegorical characteristics, though it is general mediæval property, may be borrowed from the Genoese versifier. But from those immaterial admissions it is a long step to the contentions of Amador. He states without modification that both Imperial and Ribera drew largely for the essence of their labors from the *Divine Comedy*, that Ribera followed in the path of Imperial in his imitation, and although Ribera did not perpetuate the Tuscan meters used by Imperial, he naturalized on Spanish soil the closer Dantesque imitations of his illustrious predecessor. The certainty of Amador is carried to the point of absurdity. Conceiving the idea in the first place without concrete proof in Ribera's works, he continues to construct a fine-spun theory, still without reference to the text, upon the dear figment of his brain. Puymaigre persists in calling surely Dantesque the verses for the regents of the young John II and the verses to Doña Catalina, the mother of the king,¹ entreating her to succor Castile in its fallen estate. The latter work I have neglected entirely in the examination of the lyrics of Ribera, because I do not believe that the mere presence of invective against existing abuses forms sufficient foundation for the assumption of a connection between a Spanish and an Italian satirist. Sanvisenti² denies emphatically that the presence of similar traits of character, such as severity, truthfulness, and robustness, imply a relationship. A still more comprehensive denial should be made. Farinelli would trace the conception of Fortune and the laments for Castile to the prototypes in the *Divine Comedy*; having already sought to demonstrate the instability of these propositions, I should go so far as to say that Dantesque elements appear in no works at all of Ribera. The contention that Imperial's example set Ribera to composing in the allegorical form is a good starting point for pretty theories, and we may speculate as we will upon what I have designated as spiritual influence, whether we consider Francisco Imperial or Ruy Paes de Ribera as the focus of that influence. But the theories are altogether incapable of proof. As far as Dante goes, they are of little consequence, for as he is not responsible for the essential qualities of Imperial's work, nor for anything in Ribera, it is manifestly absurd to state that he gave the impetus to the allegorical movement.

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 297.

² P. 61.

I myself have a pretty theory that Ribera has far juster claims to poetic eminence than Imperial. A sincerity and enthusiasm of definite purpose is much more clearly discernible. Amador admits that he has greater descriptive talent. Puymaigre calls him more original. His form is undoubtedly more artistic, in that he does not sacrifice congruity to a desire to weave into the introduction of his composition as many Dantesque threads as possible. Ribera, like Chaucer, devoting only a quatrain or so to the unessential details of the vision, proceeds directly to its actual substance, so that the final product obeys the rules of proportion. But I have really diverged from the main discussion, for as literature offers many examples of the formation of superior pupils by inferior masters, it makes little difference whether Ribera or Imperial be adjudged the worthier aspirant for the laurel crown.

It is conventional also to put the moralist Gonzalo Martínez de Medina into this fictitious category, but a review of his bare didactic pieces reveals neither any reminiscence of Dante nor any visible relation to Imperial. Though he treats such topics as the evils of his country and the reign of the new king, and frames exhortations to forsake vice,¹ he does not avail himself of the obvious parallels in Dante or Imperial. The reference to St. Francis in the verses upon the Trinity,²

Si dexas tiniebras e buscas la lunbre,
Avrás la morada del santo Cordero,

does not argue any acquaintance with the *Paradiso*; and it is worthy of note, that in this same piece, in distinction from so many of his contemporaries, Gonzalo omits from his list of sages the name of Dante. Sanvisenti³ rightly observes that it is not in devotion, asceticism, and relentlessness toward sin, that we are to trace the influence of Dante in Gonzalo Martínez de Medina, for these qualities characterize the prevalent attitude of the Middle Ages.

It remains to examine certain isolated occurrences of the names of Dante and Imperial. Villasandino, the protagonist of the Galician school, in his verses against the abuses of the poetic art⁴ places Dante in the following list :

Virgilio é Dante, Oraçio é Platón.

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, nos. 333, 335, 336.

³ P. 62.

² *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 337.

⁴ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 80.

Again, in a brief reply to Ferrant Manuel¹ he intimates that as Samson was preëminent for strength and Absalom for beauty, so Dante was an innovator and master of poetry :

Dante, Virgilio, é Caton
En poetrya fundaron.

The high esteem implied in these passages precludes any doubt as to the sincerity of the following lines, which Sanvisenti introduces with the words :² " Chiude la sua poesia con un' ottava, nella quale, a dir vero, non so quanto conseguentemente é *con quanta buona fede*, dice così."

A Dante el poeta, grant componedor,
Me disen, amigo, que rreprehendistes;
Sy esto es verdat, en poco tovistes
Lo que el mundo tiene por de grant valor

The substance of the composition is a reproof to Ferrant Manuel for disregarding the ancient methods :³

So maravillado commo preposystes
Syn lay é syn deslay, syn cor syn discor,
Syn doble man sobre sensillo ó menor,
Syn encadenado dexar ó prender,
Que arte comun deveades creer
Que non tiene en sy saber nin valor.

De verbo partido maestrya mayor,
Nin de macho é fenbra non vos accorrystes
Palavra perdida non la enxeristes,
En vestros desires con saña ó rigor;
De dos cosas una aproeva el error.
Por que non sopistes ó por non querer,
Pero sy se fyso por escarneçer,
Dios vos perdone, que es perdonador.

He accuses Ferrant Manuel of believing that poetry is not a matter of studious attainment, and of having reached, without any real knowledge of the best poetical devices, a lofty reputation through illegitimate means. The attitude of Ferrant Manuel towards Dante enters in as a secondary accusation. We are bound to assume that he has somewhere

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 254. Sanvisenti gives it as 258.

² P. 66.

³ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 255.

attacked the great Florentine; and since Villasandino combines this accusation with his own general objections to what he considers the radical and unlettered attempts of his rival, he evidently regards Dante as a conservative of his own school; or else with no definite opinion as to the poetical doctrine of Dante, he looks upon him in the remote distance simply as a great luminary of the world of letters in the same class with Virgil or Homer, and reproaches Ferrant Manuel for his boldness in attacking his general and well-established reputation. There is absolutely no evidence in the works of Villasandino that he had read Dante; but rather the vagueness of his allusions might argue that he knew him only as he heard his name passed from mouth to mouth.

The "finida" from a later reply of Villasandino in the same series: ¹

Pues çefides la correa
De Françisco Ynperial
Vestra arte tal ó qual
Ya sé de qué pie coxquea,

does not contradict the above conclusions. It is the last dart that Villasandino hurls at Manuel de Lando.² Villasandino plainly considers Imperial in a different school from his own; but since he is himself an admirer of Dante, it is clear that he does not consider Dantesque influence as the spring of Imperial's essential characteristics. One might argue that if he had no direct knowledge of Dante, he might at the same time praise Dante as a figurehead and carp at the elements that are the result of his influence. But it has been demonstrated that if the works of Imperial have any essential distinction from the preceding lyrics of Spain, or if Imperial established or perpetuated anything in Spain, that distinction and that thing which he perpetuated are due to

¹ *Cancionero de Baena*, no. 258.

² It is to be noted that Villasandino himself in two pieces copies closely the manner of Imperial and Ribera — one a dream in which he beholds the ship of state (*Cancionero*, no. 334), and the other a vision upon the death of King Henry (*Cancionero*, no. 34), in which appear to him allegorical personifications. It may be that these are to be ascribed to an earlier manner, in which he was a follower of the school of northern France; or in the quatrain under discussion he may have inveighed against some of Imperial's abuses of whose nature we have no knowledge.

anything rather than Dantesque influence. It is enough for our discussion to prove that Dante had no effect upon the contemporaries of Imperial.

But we can go a step farther. Santillana, to be sure, also states that de Lando was a follower of Imperial: "imitó mas que ninguno otro á Miçer Françisco Imperial";¹ but the use of the words *ninguno otro* does not imply necessarily a formal school of Imperial; and, as has already been indicated, from the standpoint of de Lando's extant works, his imitation of Imperial was not in the allegorical manner, and indeed we are not certain in what it consisted. It is very probable that the reference in both Villasandino and Santillana is to one of the numerous verse contests typical of the day, in which de Lando had supported Imperial's philosophy, and not his form of expression, so that the quatrain would be only a means for dating the commencement of what Villasandino considers de Lando's radicalism. But this possibility is far from equivalent to the admission of a distinct allegorical school of Imperial. Ruy Paes de Ribera may or may not reflect his influence. In any case, this single quatrain from the vast *Cancionero de Baena* is slight foundation for a whole literary theory, supported, as it is, only by the one passage in Santillana; and I should at least hesitate to assert the existence of a school on the basis of two vague statements, both of which apply to but one disciple and refer to we know not what aspect of discipleship, the first proceeding from a mediocre rhymester of the fifteenth century, whose judgment of literary influences and movements is not entitled to much respect, and the other from one who as the first avowed critic in Spanish literature is not likely to be infallible.

In the works of Ferrant Manuel de Lando, however, strange to say, there is no trace of Dante.² The passage quoted by Sanvisenti,³ in which Ferrant Manuel asks for information upon astronomy and upon the songs of consolation that the sacred singers hymn to the king, is too general in its substance to imply a reference to Dante. The use of the name of Dante by Diego Martínez de Medina in his reply to Imperial's

¹ *Obras*, p. 17.

² Even Sanvisenti (p. 79, n. 62) admits: "Per quanto v'abbia pensato, a me non è riuscito di riscontrare veruna specifica allusione a qualche parte della trilogia dantesca, mi sembra tuttavia sentirvi una vaga reminiscenza dell'ultima cantica." "Vaga," indeed!

³ P. 67.

To resume once more, and finally, the influence of Dante upon Imperial is purely of form, and at that, exceedingly fragmentary and unessential.¹ The influence of Imperial is perhaps to be traced in the works of Ruy Paes de Ribera, and if we are to trust the dictum of Villasandino and Santillana, in those of Ferrant Manuel de Lando. In neither of these cases, however, is it the Dantesque imitation that Imperial transmits. The assertions of Puymaigre and Baist thus lose their significance. It might be granted that Imperial is responsible in Spain for the mannerism of extended and serious allegorical analysis; but in any case the *Divine Comedy* is not his model in those things in which his influence might center. Whether the fact that Dante used allegory, though of a totally different nature and for quite another purpose, had any of what I have denominated as spiritual influence upon Imperial, and through him upon hypothetical pupils, is incapable of absolute proof. There is no doubt, however, in my own mind. The name of Dante flits before the fancies of the Sevillian poetasters of the fifteenth century in most cases in the same kind of murkiness that envelops classical antiquity. He is only a reputation. If common sense has any place in the sphere of literary judgment, all probability would point to the spiritual influence of that school whose formal and substantial influence is clearly manifest; or, specifically, it would seem that the rose gardens and the *débats* of northern France, which characterize the productions of Imperial and Ribera, influenced them and others to the perpetuation of these forms. I employ the word *pupils*, because in general parlance two or three men do not constitute a school, especially when these two or three exhibit elements of influence only very indefinitely and spasmodically, nay, not even certainly. In any case, however, there is no school in the sense that it was the recipient of a definite literary tradition of Dantesque imitation; and from data in hand, I should even hesitate to assert that it was Imperial who confirmed the French tradition. May there not have

¹ It is noteworthy that as the influence of Dante upon the Sevillian group of versifiers is less vital than upon the Catalan writers, so Castile and Andalusia are united to Italy by no such close political and commercial ties as are Catalonia and Aragon. Farinelli (p. 2) observes: "*A corto di notizie sicure e documentate non sapremmo ancora dar miglior principio alla storia della fortuna di Dante in Ispagna che togliendo in esame l'opera di Francesco Imperial, emigrato, nell'ultima metà del' 300, da Genova a Sevilla.*"

been, as in the drama, a continuous chain of development from the earliest times until, with Imperial and Ribera, a definite type is attained, although on account of the meager fragments of Spanish literature extant we are unable to follow that evolution through its various stages? Again, to grant the innovation, is Imperial or Ribera or some other responsible? Though Ribera may be in some matters the pupil of Imperial, it is by no means necessary to assume that he learned from him the essentials of his art. May not Ribera be the innovator? He seems the truer poet. It is a reasonable supposition that Ribera, though perhaps acquiring some qualities from Imperial, is himself responsible for the essential characteristics of the allegorical type as it was then manifest in Spain.

The time was not ripe for the spread of the Italian spirit. Even the Marquis of Santillana was to fail in his attempts to ingraft the Italian measures and methods. As in France of the fourteenth century, despite the efforts of Nicholas Oresme, Pierre Berquire, and Jean de Montreuil, by reason of the political and social turmoil of the day, the Petrarchian germs failed to unfold, so in Spain, Italianism had to await the nurture of Juan Boscán and Garcilaso de la Vega. The soil was not ready for the seed. In Italy Petrarch and Boccaccio had labored until the ground was rich and the fresh sprouts of the Renaissance had begun to shoot forth; but Spain and France were still dark and arid.

III

Dante's influence upon Imperial and his contemporaries, though slight, formal, fragmentary, and unproductive of results, manifests itself constantly, as we have seen, in direct literal translation. Such verbal identity is, of course, the most unquestionable proof of relation between two writers; but Catalan compositions, where Dantesque influence is almost as certain, are in all cases oddly lacking in this palpable evidence. A hasty perusal of the *Gloria de amor* of Rocaberti, even if the reader neglects to analyze the reasons for his impressions, will leave him with as firm a belief in the influence of the *Divine Comedy* as would the *Decir de las siete virtudes* or the verses on the birth of John II. There must, then, exist other characteristics than literal translation, which even unconsciously conduce to conceptions of

interrelation — circumstantial evidence, so to speak ; and before a discussion of the specific instances of Dantesque imitation in Catalan literature, it is advisable to distinguish, if only briefly, the nature and probative value of these characteristics.

There is always more or less doubt whether an imitation is direct or through the medium of another writer, especially in the Middle Ages when certain general literary forms and ideas were the common property of all lands, and poets pilfered the works of the ancients for rhetorical adornment as ruthlessly as builders of churches did their temples for columns ; or again, even to a greater degree, in the Renaissance where a proper plagiarism was consciously defined and advocated, and Pico della Mirandola gave Plato a new artistic expression or Sannazzaro transformed the Eclogues of Virgil, in much the same way as Brunelleschi constructed San Lorenzo or Alberti San Francesco, with eyes fixed constantly on the ruins of Rome. The first extant imitation of a piece of literature is in all probability to be referred to the original itself ; so that this consideration alone would assign the verses of Imperial to direct Dantesque influence, unless we are to suppose that he drew rather from an Italian imitator of the *Divine Comedy*. The more imitations that have intervened between the original and the work under discussion, the remoter the possibility of direct relation. Proximity in time, then, may be taken as the first proof of direct imitation. Imperial's several mentions of the name of Dante and his manifest familiarity with his great work preclude the possibility of some later Italian source ; and, in general, extended acquaintance with the matter of the original document is the second proof for the immediate influence of its author. Cumulative evidence is, of course, as valuable in literature as in law ; and it is to be reckoned with not only when there are a number of instances of the same kind of proof, as in this case repeated instances of acquaintance with Dantesque matter, but also when there are several instances of different kinds of proof, however weak each kind be, as, for example, proximity in time coupled with proximity in substance and language.

The third sort of proof, close approximation in language, requires a somewhat more detailed treatment. Naturally, the greater the number of identical words in the respective passages, the more undoubted the connection between the two ; but when the similarity is reduced to a

mere analogy of conception and the translation of one or two words, the case is more difficult. Here the decision is affected by the existence of translated passages or at least extended verbal identity in other parts of the poet's work, especially if contiguous to the debated lines; or secondly, by the uniqueness of language, if it be characteristic of both the original and the asserted imitation. The description of Charon in the *Sompni* of Bernat Metge¹ offers an excellent illustration of the point at hand. The Catalan author uses the words

fort vell, ab los pels blanchs — ab los hulls flameiants.²

Dante, in two separate lines, describes the infernal ferryman in the following terms :

Un vecchio, bianco per antico pelo,³

and

Che intorno agli occhi avea di fiamme rote.⁴

The Virgilian passage, which Dante seems to have had in mind, reads :

Charon, cui plurima mento

Canities inculta iacet, stant lumina flamma.⁵

Vell corresponds to *vecchio*; *pels blanchs* roughly to *bianco per antico pelo*; and *flameiants* to the idea of *fiamme*; but as there is nothing at all extraordinary about any of these expressions, and all are virtual translations of the passage in the *Æneid*, they are not in themselves sufficient testimony of the influence of the *Divine Comedy*. Nay, the Virgilian *stant lumina flamma* is closer to the Catalan than the original and bolder *di fiamme rote*, and again the union of the description of the hair and eyes in the same line of the *Æneid* would appear to be the source of their conjunction by Metge. The very fact that *di fiamme rote* is an unusual expression, if it were found also in the *Sompni*, would be a well-nigh irrefutable proof of Dantesque influence. When, however, we find this description of Charon joined by Metge to so close a verbal similarity as is presented between *a les tenebres infernals* where exist *fret e calor inextimable*, and *Nelle tenebre eterne, in caldo e in gelo*, and even to a direct translation :

no haian esperança de jamay veure lo cel

from

Non isperate mai veder lo cielo,

¹ The edition that I use for quotation is *Le Songe de Bernat Metge*, J.-M. Guardia, Paris, 1889.

² P. 142.

⁴ *Inf.*, III, 99.

³ *Inf.*, III, 83.

⁵ *Æn.*, VI, 299-300.

and when neither of these lines of Dante occurs in Virgil, the accumulation of evidence makes the influence of this passage of the *Inferno* a certainty. Since, moreover, these few lines of the *Sompni* are virtually the only positive proof of a Dantesque imitation, a careful analysis becomes all the more important.

The method of identification by observation of the recurrence of an extraordinary phrase has been of value in the treatment of Imperial. It was there stated that the lines

Mira las riendas é ansy mira el freno
é sy ty queda sano algun pedaço

were a reminiscence of

Che val perchè ti racconciasse il freno
Giustiniano, se la sella è vuota?

Now there is an identity only in the single word *freno*. The concept of the bridle of government, though not absolutely humdrum, is yet not extraordinary enough to warrant by itself the assumption of Dantesque influence. But add to this consideration two further data: the similarity of the context in each passage, namely, the denunciation of the respective countries of the two poets, and secondly, the apparent stupidity with which Imperial lugs in the Italian metaphor, as if he exclaimed to himself: "Lo! Here is a fair adornment, to deck my poem withal!" and recked little of its appropriateness to his immediate thought; and by cumulative evidence the imitation again becomes a certainty. This last characteristic of the incongruity is itself almost conclusive, for if we find in one conception an idea or turn of language which is identical with an idea or expression in another and has but slight bearing upon the immediate context, it is likely that the compiler of the former passage has dragged it in as a *tour de force*. Imitation, then, by close approximation in language may be determined in four ways: by the uniqueness of the expression, by its conjunction with absolute translation or slavish similarity of diction, by analogy in the general trend of the context, and by incongruity of a phrase with the immediate connection in which it appears.

Imitation is again recognizable by mere similarity of conception. As I have pointed out, the Middle Ages in all lands laid so little stress upon originality that it is rash to make any statements without certain

reservations. Identity of language, appearing in direct connection with similarity of conception, or at another place in a poem in which similarity of conception has already been observed, virtually proves the source of the conception. If this be lacking, it is not advisable to assume an influence unless the similarity of thought extends over a great part of the composition or unless the ideas occur in the same order. Thus in the *Decir de las siete virtudes* the invocation to Apollo, paralleled by that in the first *Paradiso*, the description of Dante, which would seem to be modeled upon that of Cato in the *Purgatorio*, the vision of Leah, and the invective against Castile, since they are literary commonplaces of the period, would not constitute enough analogies in conception to admit of certain conclusions, unless they were united to frequent translations. If the conceptions are not literary commonplaces, the presence of several of them is enough to establish an imitation. Thus it is only the ramifications of idea which accompany the invocation that by their number and uniqueness make plain the source of Imperial; for he takes from this canto the prayer that Apollo breathe his inspiration upon him; adding the reference to Marsyas, he beseeches the heavenly light that aid be lent to his memory; he uses the simile of the spark of fire; he refers to the constellation whose four circles form three crosses; and he introduces the example of Glaucus. Again, in the works of Ruy Paes de Ribera the conclusion was reached that the single analogy of a person gone astray in a wild and gloomy wood was insufficient; but on the other hand, we shall discover that the great number of similarities in the allegory of Rocaberti's *Gloria de amor*, where there is virtually no verbal approximation, is one of the determining factors for the decision. The other factor is an identity of order in the allegorical narrative. If a group of similar ideas occurs in the same arrangement in two different productions, it becomes the more probable that one is modeled upon the other. Some of the tests in imitations in language will be found to apply also to ideas, and vice versa. For instance, the presence of an extraordinary thought in two authors is as safe a testimony of relation as an extraordinary phrase; and the last-named test of order in ideas holds true for a series of similar words.

In brief, these four criterions may be applied: the time of the composition in the history of the literature under question; the general

familiarity evinced with the name and the works of the original author ; approximation in language ; and close similarity in thought or form.

In the light of this analysis of the tests of imitation, it is necessary to interpret and reconcile the various theories about Dantesque elements in Catalan literature of the fifteenth century, and to assign what examples we find to the categories defined at the very beginning of this essay. It is incumbent upon me first to summarize the different statements upon the subject.

The criticism by Cambouliu,¹ except in fragments relating to Rocaberti, is inaccessible to me. The brief and superficial essay of Milá y Fontanals,² "Notas sobre la influencia de la literatura italiana en la catalana," does little more than indicate certain lines of investigation with a few examples. The important statements in this article are : the assertion of Dantesque influence in the *Sompni* of Bernat Metge, a work which Farinelli assigns to 1396, a date shortly after the death of John I ; the mention of the translation of the *Divine Comedy* about 1429 by Andreu Febrer and the presence of Dantesque elements in his original verse ; the assertion of Dantesque elements in the anonymous *Venturos Pelegri* ; the reference to a mention of Dante by Jaume Roig in 1474 ; again to the copy of the *Purgatorio* with comment made by Bernat Nicholau Blanquer in the fifteenth century ; to the *Sentencias catòlicas* of Jaume Ferrer de Blanes, a collection of sententious sayings made from the *Divine Comedy* before the close of the century ; and lastly, a short discussion of Dantesque elements in Rocaberti's *Gloria de amor*, an allegorical picture of the joys of good and the sorrows of wicked lovers. The essay, which is meant to be little more than suggestive, is of slight value except as an impetus to further study. It would leave one with the general impression, contrary probably to the writer's own ideas, that the influence of Dante upon the actual monuments of Catalan literature was not vital or permanent.

The essay of Enrico Cardona³ adds to Milá's discussion in emphasis upon the accuracy of Febrer's translation and its efficacy in the introduction of the *terzina* into Catalonia, and in a critique of the *Gloria*

¹ Cambouliu, *Essai sur l'histoire de la littérature catalane*, Paris, 1858, pp. 105 ff. (Recension of this essay by Ebert, *Jahrbuch für rom. und eng. Lit.*, vol. ii, pp. 267 ff.)

² *Obras*, vol. iii, pp. 499-506.

³ *Dell'antica letteratura catalana*, Naples, 1878, chap. iv.

de amor, wherein he maintains that love corresponds to the moral rule in the *Divine Comedy* as the criterion by which judgment is passed, that the imitation is both in thought and in word, and that Rocaberti errs through confusion by a lack in system for his categories of souls. Rubió y Lluch in *El Renacimiento*¹ finds the influence of Dante in Antony Vallmanya and again in Bernat Metge. Morel-Fatio² lays stress upon the commentaries for the Italian poem and upon Rocaberti's use of the *terza rima*. Ebert's article in the *Jahrbuch für rom. und eng. Lit.*,³ a recension of the work by Cambouliu, is important for its elaborate analysis and summary of Rocaberti's poem, and for its emphasis upon the essential divergency between the Italian and Catalan languages, which is made manifest in Febrer's awkward attempt to transplant the hendecasyllables to Catalan soil. Denk⁴ adds nothing to Ebert except the statement of Dantesque elements in Vallmanya, for he too discusses the translation of Febrer and presents a still more elaborate summary of the *Gloria de amor*.

Farinelli is right in censuring Sanvisenti's treatment of the Catalan poets. In his short chapter⁵ Sanvisenti does little more than mention various compositions that he may deny them a Dantesque origin. The *Venturos Pelegri* recalls in places the allegory of the *Divine Comedy*, but there is no certainty. "Ma, nel suo insieme, il componimento non si discosta dal tipo di quelle ascetiche produzioni in cui i religiosi dell'età di mezzo andavan dicendo del mondo oltreterreno di castigo e di purgazione, per ridurre i traviati in sul dritto cammino." He mentions a possible analogy in both Miguel Stela and Leonard de Sors, but discovers nothing conclusive. He concludes his chapter with an analysis of Rocaberti's poem, as usual, in view of former analyses, superfluous. The pith of his conclusions upon the *Gloria de amor* appears in the following excerpt: "Il divino poeta ha solamente potuto ravvivare alquanto le smunte tinte d'un vecchio quadro, non dare al pittor novello

¹ Pp. 37 ff.

² Gröber, *Grundriss*; Morel-Fatio, *Katalanische Litteratur* (Strassburg, 1893), II B, 2 Abt., 1 Lief., pp. 78 ff. and 124.

³ Vol. ii, pp. 267 ff.

⁴ *Einführung in die Geschichte der altcatalanische Literatur*, Munich, 1893: general, p. 95; Vallmanya, pp. 305-306; Febrer, pp. 333-337; Rocaberti, pp. 337-348; March, p. 386.

⁵ Pp. 249 ff.

tutta una tavolezza nuova né una nuova idea." Rocaberti's use of the Italian hendecasyllable he describes as "vario nell' accentazione e ben sonante." In the chapter upon the influence of Petrarch, having in a note¹ denied that there is any sure reference to the *Divine Comedy* in certain phrases that he quotes from the *Sompni* of Bernat Metge, he infers:² "qualche frase par ricordino le opere di Dante — ma il non esservi nulla di preciso m' induce a ristare da confronti che potrebbero essere casuali coincidenze di concetto, pago invece di concludere, a questo proposito, che il generico esempio de' nostri sommi diede all' arte spagnuola la più sicura autorità per compenetrare fra loro tipi di letteratura e forme poetiche le quali già erano care al medioevo, aggiungendo tuttavia a quelle qualche cosa di più che permette risentire l' influsso speciale di quei sommi italiani." The end of the whole matter is, he concludes, that in Catalonia the efficacy of the *Divine Comedy* was overshadowed by the *Rime* of Petrarch.

The objection to this piece of criticism is that it neglects all the earlier and many of the later literary lights of Catalonia, such as St. Vincent Ferrer or Ausias March, and advances a theory on insufficient ground, such as the denial of Dante's direct influence upon Bernat Metge. Farinelli, whose article, as part of a recension,³ is of necessity only fragmentary, having attacked and captured Sanvisenti's air castle, proceeds to fill in those breaches which had been left in the construction.

Before 1400 he brings to light no imitation of the *Divine Comedy*. Visions and allegorical journeys are common in Catalonia from the earliest times; Arnaut de Villeneuve, though a contemporary of Dante and a kindred spirit, especially in his relations to Boniface VIII, exhibits no trace of an acquaintance with the great Italian poem; his pupil, Ramon Lull, is as ignorant of Dante, though his works echo the same mediæval sentiments. At the turning of the century, with the entrance of humanism, signalized by the instruction of the Italians Giovanni Parteni and his successors Maestro Guglielmo and Francesco Boccinis at Valencia, and with a sure knowledge of Dante illustrated by the mention of his name in one of the sermons of St. Vincent Ferrer, the way is paved for the imitation of parts of the *Divine Comedy* in the *Sompni* of Bernat Metge. Farinelli dissects this composition that he may point out the Dantesque elements. He finds traces of the *Divine*

¹ P. 383.² P. 354.³ Op. cit., pp. 20-37.

Comedy in what little has been published of the original verse of Andreu Febrer. With his finger upon the *Sentencias catòlicas* of Mossen Jaume Ferrer, with well-nigh as unstable footing as Sanvisenti, he sets forth the claim that the people of Catalonia admired and imitated rather the sententious side of Dante's genius. He concludes his recension with the assertion that the *Divine Comedy* is the only work of Dante which influenced Ausias March, presenting a few remote parallels and outlining the analogy in spirit between Dante and him whom, when we have plowed through many pages of the unrelieved dullness and oppressive mediocrity of his predecessors and contemporaries, we shall not hesitate with Farinelli to denominate "il maggior poeta catalano di quel secolo."

I have nothing to add to what Farinelli has said about the introduction of Italian influence into Catalonia. Our discussion will naturally begin with what he states to be the first real employment of Dante's machinery, the *Sompni* of Bernat Metge.¹

The author must forsooth, like all allegorical travelers, have a guide for his vision, and he chooses the shade of his dead master, King John I. The description "de mitja estatura ab reverent cara"² presents no real similarity to the picture of the group of poets in the fourth *Inferno* or of Cato in the first *Purgatorio*.³ His guide only conforms to the regular mediæval procedure when he clears up the various puzzles that besiege the author's intellect. A long beard⁴ is not so rare an object that Metge could not evolve the idea without the suggestion of the Cato in the *Purgatorio*, and the parallelism would seem to be refuted in that the conception of this long-bearded companion of John I as an unceasing monitor for his soul of the misdeeds of his earthly life is not found in Dante's system of punishment. The words of the king: "car recordant mon deffeliment me' renovella la tristor. Pero, pus axi ho vols, hoyes,"⁵ are no closer to Ugolino's introduction:

Tu vuoi ch' io rinnovelli
Disperato dolor che il cor mi preme,⁶

¹ For biographical notes, I refer to the several histories and articles upon early Catalan literature already mentioned. ² P. 2.

³ For a more detailed analysis of the substance of this composition see pp. 350-355 of Sanvisenti and the essay of Farinelli.

⁴ P. 5.

⁵ P. 100.

⁶ *Inf.*, XXXIII, 4-5.

than to Æneas' address to Dido at the beginning of the second book of the *Æneid*:

Infandum, regina, jubes renovare dolorem;

and the naturalness of the concept permits belief that the thing might have sprung from the writer's own imagination. Again, the description of the struggle of the angels and demons for the soul of the king¹ has no point of contact with the words of Buonconte in the fifth *Purgatorio* except the mere fact of the contention, a *motif* that occurs throughout the Middle Ages with tedious frequency. The location of Hell at the center of the universe² is by no means peculiar to the cosmography of Dante and the didactic Orpheus of the *Sompni*.

Up to this point, then, we have no sure indication of a knowledge of the *Divine Comedy*. To apply our tests, the similar conceptions of a guide for the vision, a strife for the soul in the article of death, and an explanation of the geography of the lower world are not extraordinary or numerous enough to justify a conclusion; and the approximation in language is close in no passage. The different setting of the vision would conduce to graver doubt, for Metge conceives himself in prison under torment of spirit, when in a dream John of Aragon appears to him, solves certain of his doubts, and relates the story of his own death and the reason for his punishment, and his companion Orpheus outlines the penal system of the universe. Thus far, the comment of Farinelli seems unjustifiable: "usa famigliarmente anche espressioni virgiliane e dantesche" and "a tratti, perchè il concetto pagano abbia parvenza cristiana, vi mette pochi e leggeri ricordi del cieco carcere di Dante." But Farinelli is evidently only passing judgment upon this portion of the work by anticipation of what is to come. In other words, these vague analogies in substance must be ratified by close verbal approximation; and this, as I have pointed out in the abstract discussion of the tests of imitation, is supplied by the description of Charon.³ To make assurance doubly sure, the Limbo outlined by Orpheus corresponds exactly to that of Dante, although such a correspondence, were it not united to the delineation of Charon, would in itself be insufficient. Minos as judge is an additional factor in the chain of evidence; but there is naught to support the remark of Farinelli that

¹ Pp. 100-109.

² P. 157.

³ The description of Hell extends from page 140 to page 158.

the arrow simile which depicts the fall of the souls after the sentence of Minos is a reminiscence of Dante's employment of the same figure¹ to describe the approach of the bark of Phlegyas. He is right in pointing out that the picture of the city of Dis is modeled rather upon Virgil. From the treatment of Limbo to this point the similarity in conception is so marked, and the order of ideas so close to the *Divine Comedy*, that these characteristics might be in themselves conclusive; but henceforth the confused system of Metge is in total discord with the perspicacious arrangement by Dante.

The plain truth, then, is that the starting point for any absolute assertion of Dantesque elements is the description of Charon, and this only. The order and similarity of ideas for a large section of Hell are strong proof, but offer no certainty except in union with this indubitable verbal imitation. Farinelli himself indicates as many analogies with the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. Sanvisenti's theories lose their wind. His language, to be sure, is cautious and vague in the extreme; he wishes to avoid "confronti che potrebbbero essere casuali coincidenze di concetti," and at the same time he admits "qualche cosa di più, che permette risentire l'influsso speciale di questi sommi italiani." But the general trend of his expression is a denial of the immediate influence of the *Divine Comedy*. Similarity in the material and order of conception makes this influence a certainty, and confirms the probability that Metge drew the other less palpable analogies from the source, the knowledge of which is proved conclusively by the verbal approximation of the Charon passage.

The nature of the imitation differs essentially from that of Imperial. The Dantesque elements in the *Decir de las siete virtudes* have no bearing upon his final purpose, an exaltation, in the French manner, of the seven Virtues. The reminiscences of Imperial's reading in the *Divine Comedy* are like bits of tinsel which he scatters at random over the dull allegorical dress to brighten its dullness. The invocation to Apollo, the delineation of Cato, the vision of Leah, the invective against Castile, have no place in the essential framework and development of the purpose. Not so in this Catalan imitation. It is little else than a reduction and combination of the first cantica of the *Divine Comedy* and the sixth *Aeneid*. The general allegorical form of a description of Hell is

¹ *Inf.*, VIII, 13.

the same, although it is doubtful whether Metge had in mind any but the superficial, literal sense; and the substance, the torments of the condemned, is also identical. We have, then, what has been termed in the section upon Imperial a double concrete influence in form and substance of Dante and Virgil, in the same general class as the *Franciade* of Ronsard. It is true that there is evidence of the same kind of attempt to explain figurative language as in the verses of Imperial. Where Dante simply presents the picture of Minos standing, Metge at once defines him as "molt cruel jutge"; and analyzes Dante's "Serpentelli e ceraste avean per crine"¹ by "Ab serpents quels pengen per los caps avall, a manera de cabells"; and again when the Italian poet suggests the character of the sages in Limbo by their appearance, conversation, and action, the Catalan strikes boldly out with: "E aci estan los gentils filosoffs e pohetes, els bons cavallers, e aquells qui han trobades arts, e les han divulgades, e han aprofitat a molts en lo mon." After all Metge is writing only prose and has no great pretensions; and it is something, instead of culling a pretty picture here or an invocation there, to have comprehended to a small degree the scheme of the whole *Inferno*.

In another composition of Metge, the *Libre de Fortuna e Prudencia*,² "tediosissimo poema allegorico morale," as defined by Farinelli, the conception of Fortune is somewhat similar to that of Dante, but there is naught that smacks of verbal identity. The same may be asserted of the six lines which Farinelli would correlate with the "nessun maggior dolore" *terzina*. The mock sermon ascribed to him exhibits no reminiscence of Dante.

The anonymous *Venturos Pelegri*, for which likewise Milá y Fontanals vaguely claims features similar to parts of the *Divine Comedy*, and to which Sanvisenti has devoted so much unnecessary space, is lacking in verbal approximation. Its purpose, as a whole, is altogether different. It resembles any of the many episodes in Dante's journey through Hell and Purgatory. A soul in the torment of Purgatory relates his story to a pilgrim who has gone astray on his journey to the Jubilee at Rome and begs for the indulgence that the pilgrim will gain. Death had come upon him as he slept in pleasure before he had fulfilled his promise to restore the goods acquired by his father's avarice, the usual debate for his soul had occurred, and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin finally

¹ *Inf.*, IX, 41.

² Milá y Fontanals, *Obras*, vol. iii, p. 386.

triumphed. None of this widespread mediæval substance is of any significance. Inasmuch as an imitation of idea is almost certain to carry along with it some of the language in which the idea is clothed, in none of the compositions of the school of Imperial, or so far in Catalonia, has the influence of the conception been dissociated from some close verbal similarity; and there is surely nothing in the *Venturos Pelegrí* to establish a new precedent.

In the accessible verses of Miguel Stela and Leonard de Sors¹ I have discovered nothing of importance to our discussion, and in the published lyrics of Febrer² only the remotest kind of parallels. The simile of the falling leaves which occurs in the "sirventes" beginning, *Doloros crits ab vets brava terribla*, is closer to the Virgilian original³ than to the Dantesque paraphrase,⁴ except for the use of the one word *despulha* which may reflect the Italian *spoglie*. I have nothing to add to the previous comment of Ebert, Denk, and Scartazzini⁵ upon the nature and the value of Febrer's translation. Vallmanya's mention of Dante's allusion to Lavinia in the fourth *Inferno*⁶ is worth repeating only to show that the writer had read at least a part of the *Divine Comedy*.

There remains the *Gloria de amor* of Rocaberti.⁷ Omitting a detailed analysis, which has already been given three times, by Ebert, Denk, and Sanvisenti, I shall touch only upon those characteristics which bear upon the interpretation of the poem.

The introduction in prose with its exhortations to the young and fair, with its gardens and its grove, is plainly French in spirit. The apparition of *una pusque bellissima donzella* who betrays *la candida vista dins subtilíssima vel* may bear a relation to Beatrice of the thirtieth *Purgatorio*:

Sopra candido vel cinta d'oliva
Donna m'apparve;⁸

¹ Baselga y Ramírez, *Cancionero Catalan*, Zaragoza, 1896.

² Milá y Fontanals, *Obras*, vol. iii, pp. 441-473.

³ *Æn.*, VI, 309. ⁴ *Inf.*, III, 112-114.

⁵ Scartazzini, *Eine altcatalanische Dante-übersetzung*, *Magazin für die Literatur des Auslandes*, no. 52, 1870.

⁶ *Sort feta per Nanthoni Vallmanya notari en lahor de les monges de Ualldonzella*, *Torres Amat Memorias*, pp. 639 ff.

⁷ *Gloria de amor*, C. del Balzo, *Poesie intorno a Dante*, vol. iv, p. 5 (Rome, 1893).

⁸ Vv. 31, 32.

and Rocaberti may have derived his emphasis upon her eyes from the perusal of the *Paradiso*. In the first *cant*, wherein the writer finds himself astray and depressed in heart, the ideas of the wooded valley, the desirability of death, and the difficulty of describing the gloom of the prospect are extraordinary enough in conjunction for the suspicion of a relation to the opening lines of the *Divine Comedy*. An occasional identity of diction strengthens the possibility.

Ab dolor gran *me retrobi* un dia
 Dins una vall darbres tant dolorosa
 Qu'esmagnant la dolor que sentia,
 La pensa trobé la mort desigosa,
 Trist, no sce dir l'entrar de ma ventura
 Tant era ple de tristor mon entendre
 Lo dret repos nega ser ma factura!¹

A comparison with the introduction to the *Proceso* of Ruy Paes de Ribera, where also a gloomy valley is chosen as the scene of the vision, will reveal the difference between a real reminiscence of Dante in Rocaberti and a mere coincidence of allegorical form in the Sevillan rhymester.

The second *cant* transplants the phrase *lago del cor*;² and translates with some accuracy the simile from the fifth *Inferno*:

Che mugghia come fa mar per tempesta
 Se da contrari venti è combattuto.³
 Cridant la mort ab veu tan dolorosa
 Com fa la mar perdos vents combatuda.

The simile of the fall of the leaves is here closer to Dante than to Virgil:

Come d'autunno si levan le foglie
 L'una appressa dell'altra. . . .⁴
 Si com lo temps qui ve ab tal fortuna
 Que dels arbres les fulles s'en aporta
 No tot justat, *mes una apres una*.
 Quam multa in silvis autumnus frigore primo
 lapsa cadunt folia.⁵

¹ I quote from the unsatisfactory text of del Balzo.

² *Inf.*, I, 20.

⁴ *Inf.*, III, 112-113.

³ Vv. 29-30.

⁵ *Æn.*, VI, 309-310.

The substance of the *cant* is a complaint against the vicissitudes of his passion, the principal theme of which is a wearisome elaboration of the "pangs of despis'd love."

The third and fourth *cants* with the French machinery of an allegorical castle, the guide *dels amants Conaxença*, and the first sight of those who have been condemned for faithlessness in love, are only of direct significance for the present subject in their emphasis upon the preponderance of French matter.

The long fifth *cant* contains a description of Venus enthroned with Cupid and surrounded by men and women canonized in the Court of Love, as if the writer held before his imagination the remembrance of some altar piece of the Madonna high seated amidst a group of saints. The *terzina*

A qui io viu escoltant no suspir
Ne plant ne dol ne tristor ne turment
Mas viu amor turmentar *sens martir*¹

is fairly close to the description of Limbo. The lines

Ffeyen un ioch qui a la fi *segira*
Com per lo vent larena pres marina²

are evidently modeled upon

Facevano un tumulto, il qual s'aggira
Sempre in quell'aria senza tempo tinta,
Come la rena quando a turbo spira.³

The lines

Viu dius un temps tan estranya crestuda
Denamorats que james no pensara
Amor uagues una tal part venguda,⁴

if they are at all reminiscent, are at least a complete transformation of

Si lunga tratta
Di gente, ch'io non avrei mai creduto
Che morte tanta n'avesse disfatta.⁵

¹ P. 25, *terzina* 8.

³ *Inf.*, III, 28-30.

² *Terzina* 10.

⁴ P. 26, *terzina* 9.

⁵ *Inf.*, III, 55-57.

And now while Rocaberti questions the several lovers whom he meets, as heretofore his verse has echoed the first four cantos of the *Inferno*, the queries and answers are drawn from the canto of *Francesca*. I cite two typical examples. He importunes Achilles thus :

Mes *dius lo temps del delitos suspir*
Lahon ne com tu conaguist amor
*Per lo qual sents complir lo teu desir?*¹

and the verse

*Amor emort en su temps conegui*²

seems to echo

Amor condusse noi ad una morte.

The honor that Conaxença bids Rocaberti³ show may be extracted from two phrases of the former canto :

and *Onorate l' altissimo poeta*

*Fannomi onore ; e di ciò fanno bene.*⁴

The sixth *cant* recounts the further wandering through the mysterious domain, as they stop here to watch Petrarch strive with three Frenchmen for the laurel wreath of the poet of love, or linger at the convent of Irene, while Conaxença dilates upon the nature of love. Rocaberti outdoes himself in the splendid simile with which he presents Dante and Beatrice :

Com arbre gran qui te longua radice
En terra baix viu dius lo foch damor
*Lo sabent Dant con sua Beatrice.*⁵

As the several groups of lovers are introduced, reminiscences of the fifth canto of the *Inferno* continue through this and the following division, for instance :

Lo teu gran dolor aplanyer ma vençut ;

¹ P. 28, *terzina* 3; cf. *Inf.*, V, 118-120.

² *Terzina* 7.

³ P. 30, *terzina* 10.

⁴ *Inf.*, IV, 80, 93.

⁵ P. 34, *terzina* 9.

and the meeting with Macias :¹

Molt volunters parlar ab ell volria.
Quant serem prop lamors tu molt lo pregue
Per fiu amor quin tal delit lo mena
Te vulla dir ço que amant denegue.²

In the eighth *cant*, having been ferried across the Hellespont by Leander, in the ninth he sees Francesca da Rimini herself amidst the followers of the god of love. He is at last received at the court, whence, wounded by a gold-tipped arrow, he is sent forth under the guidance of Conaxença to seek his refractory sweetheart. A final parallel, indicated by Sanvisenti, is the characterization of Semiramis :

Semiramis qui de sa cobeiança,
Segons se lig, feu ley imperial,³

which evidently reflects the fifth *Inferno* :

Che libito fe' licito in sua legge.⁴

By accumulation of similar ideas that are at the same time uncommon, and by the language in which those ideas are expressed, the influence of Dante upon Rocaberti is shown to be a certainty. It is noteworthy that in no case is the approximation in diction very close, but it is rather by the uniqueness and number of the instances that the imitation is made clear. Rocaberti does not seem to have the *Divine Comedy* before his eyes ; or, if he has, he often purposely transforms the mode of expression. In spiritual influence, which I have defined at the beginning of the essay, Virgil, no less than Dante, helps to form the literary manner of Rocaberti. The *Divine Comedy* may have supplied the framework for the *Gloria de amor* ; but Rocaberti's idea of an afterworld for lovers may very well have originated in the sixth *Æneid* :

Hic quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit,
secreti celant calles et myrtea circum
silva tegit ; curae non ipsa in morte relinquunt.⁵

It is curious that, whereas the verses of Imperial bristle with literal translation, in these two Catalan compositions of Metge and Rocaberti

¹ P. 37, *terzina* 2 ; cf. *Inf.*, V, 117.

² P. 44, *terzina* 2 and 3 ; cf. *Inf.*, V, 73 ff.

³ P. 58, *terzina* 2.

⁴ V. 56.

⁵ Vv. 442-444.

the imitation approaches anything like such translation only in one short line. The Catalonians deserve greater praise in that they heed rather the general scheme of the *Inferno*.

For it is only the *Inferno* that they seem to know; Rocaberti does not even go beyond the fifth canto; Metge, although he reaches the city of Dis, confuses his system thereafter, perhaps with malice aforethought that he may conceal his source, as in his pilferings from Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*.¹ The work of the latter, however, I have tried to demonstrate, is a mere fragment from Dante's huge fabric. Rocaberti by the combination of the French and Italian currents achieves a worthier product, in which critics center their acumen upon the resuscitation of French allegory by union with Dantesque form. I have already quoted the substance of Sanvisenti's judgment, which is as sane and as well phrased as any. Cambouliu² is somewhat more emphatic: "C'est pourtant ce thème (l'amour chevaleresque) que Rocaberti a repris dans la *Gloria d'amor*, et que, grâce à l'appui de Dante, il a trouvé moyen de rajeunir et de rendre intéressant. . . . Eriger cet ensemble d'idées et de conventions en loi morale, étendre cette loi à tous les temps et en faire la base de la condition future des âmes au-delà du tombeau, telle fut la pensée de l'auteur de la *Gloria d'amor*." To translate these criticisms into our own terminology, Rocaberti has produced a concrete imitation of Dante in form. As Fazio degli Uberti brought a geographical treatise and Christine de Pisan the exaltation of Reason and her sovereign into the model of the *Divine Comedy*, so the Catalan poet has formulated his different substance, a mediæval treatise on love in the French method, in the same mold as Dante's allegorical journey.

Different indeed is his substance. These two mediævalists, upon whom alone³ in Catalonia of the fifteenth century there descends any

¹ The knowledge of this plagiarism we owe to the broad learning and acute memory of Farinelli, *Note sulla fortuna del Corbaccio nella Spagna medievale, Bausteine zur rom. philol.*, 1905, pp. 401-460.

² Cf. the above-mentioned recension of Ebert.

³ The works of Ausias March, perhaps, form an exception, if indeed it can be said at all that he underwent the influence of Dante. He denominates the Italian poet as *lo Dant historical* (p. 177, edition cited below), and seems once or twice to approximate the diction of the *Divine Comedy*. I should hesitate to follow Farinelli in stressing the analogy in spirit between March and Dante as a proof of the influence of the Italian poet upon the Catalan. Ausias March appears to me to

tangible vestige of Dantesque heritage, never once catch a glimpse of the deeper life that underlies the outward crust of the *Divine Comedy*. It is worthy of note, as an illustration of the perfectly natural course in which all literary movements proceed, that both Imperial and Metge come of Italian families, and Metge may have lived in Italy at Bologna;¹ but neither brought from his connection with Italy much inspiration to the interpretation of the great poem. I cannot agree with Farinelli, however, that it is the sententious aspect of Dante's work that appeals to the Catalonians. The *Sentencias catblicas* alone prove nothing; and the works of Metge and Rocaberti, whose chief interest is in the

mark a stage in the theory of spiritual love somewhat in advance of that incorporated in the *dolce stil nuovo*. He is rather a Petrarchist. Neoplatonism finds expression in his absolute divorce of body and spirit, and his conceptions are well-nigh as ethereal as those of Benivieni, Pico della Mirandola, or even Michael Angelo. The discrepancy between man's two natures is emphasized in the *Cants de mort* as well as in the *Cants d'amor*. I quote from the first *estramp* in the *Cants d'amor* (*Obras del poeta valencià Ausias March*, Francesco Fayos y Antony, p. 173 (Barcelona, 1884)):

Si com Sanct Pau Dèu li sostrague l'arma
del cos perquè ves divinals misteris,
car es lo cos del esperit lo càrcer
é tant com viu ab elles en tenebra,
axí amor l'esperit meu arrapa
é no hi acull gens maculada pensa
epergó sent lo delit qui no's cansa
sí que ma carn la ver' amor no'm torba;

And from the second *Cant de mort*, p. 200:

Deu há dos móns á tot hom establít
axí com són dos natures en ell
cascuna part espera en aquell
d'hon l'esser tráu fínit ó infinit.
Al nostre cos la mort del tot confón
perdent son be lo qual es tot present
lo esperit no tem anulament
per mort reviu mes vá no sabent hon.

The translation of Febrer is not an original literary production, resulting from Dantesque influence, but is rather an indication of that influence. In like fashion a mere collection of quotations from the *Divine Comedy*, such as the *Sentencias catblicas* of Ferrer, cannot be reckoned as an important landmark in the evolution of Catalan literature.

¹ Farinelli, p. 26.

allegorical form of the *Comedy*, are a direct and palpable proof to the contrary. At least, the Catalonians surpass the Sevillans in the breadth of their vision; and as Imperial for a moment seems inspired, when he beholds his master peering through the luxuriant delights of the French garden:

E commo quando entre árboles asome
Alguno, que ante los sus ramos mesce,

so Rocaberti, though finding him in no less incongruous surroundings, swelling the wearisome Petrarchistic throng of model lovers, yet eclipses himself, raising himself above the dreary plain of allegory by his enthusiastic reverence for the loftiest of the world's poets:

Com arbre gran qui te longua radice
En terra baix viu dins lo loch damor
Lo sabent Dant con sua Beatrice.

Dante, of course, is technically a mediævalist like Imperial or Rocaberti. He is the highest manifestation of an age which in Italy he concludes; but he elevates mediæval expression to such a pinnacle and so transfigures it with his own personality that his sources are no longer recognizable. On antecedent probability, so personal and transcendent an achievement is incapable of real imitation. The pupil may seize upon fragmentary elements, but anything that approaches a repetition is impossible. In the beginning at least, especially in Castile, the influence of Dante has been shown to be both slight and inorganic, and, on antecedent probability again, it is unlikely, that at the court of John II a whole structure of Italian imitation could be reared by Santillana and Juan de Mena upon so unstable a foundation. It is rather the movement from which Dante springs that is subject to imitation, or, since mediævalism was universal, to different national expressions. The *Divine Comedy* is mediævalism, but at a unique and unattainable height. Italy was severed less than the other Latin nations from the traditions of classical ideals, and was never thoroughly mediæval; it is rather France that is the point whence radiates the ordinary mediæval type. Only as the expression of the fully developed Renaissance does Italy affect permanently the rest of Europe; and it is to be noted that then the energy of the influence is concentrated not in the individual but in the movement.

ADDITIONAL NOTE. — I observed in Farinelli's treatment of Santillana (p. 45, note 3), too late for insertion in the body of this article, that the less figurative clause quoted upon p. 10, "á mi memoria, etc.," and the additional application of the spark figure are themselves derived from the last canto of the *Paradiso*. This information is corroborative of the theory advanced upon that page, for in the former instance, instead of translating the metaphor of the first canto, which is the basis of his invocation, Imperial substitutes the more prosaic expression from another canto, and in the latter instance, not satisfied that Dante's figure of the earlier canto is comprehended, he transplants another employment of the same figure in the *Paradiso* to explain and elaborate the first. Imperial does not even invent his prosiness; he derives it from the *Comedy* or combines different passages of the *Comedy* to conform to his less inspired conception of poetic fitness. Nor does this new instance of borrowing from the *Paradiso* affect the statement made upon p. 27 about Imperial's general neglect of that Cantica. The first and last cantos of the *Paradiso*, as its most conspicuous parts, would be most likely to catch his casual glance; and the borrowings in both cantos, with the exception of the Glaucus comparison from the immediately adjoining context, being merely from invocations, imply no knowledge either of the framework or the substance of the third Cantica.